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Winter • 1951-52

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

VOLUME 21 *Winter 1951-52* NUMBER 1

IN MEMORIAM

Christian Gauss

Feb. 2, 1878—Nov. 1, 1951

Beloved member of the Editorial
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The Spirit of the Age

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

BY THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE, I mean no more than the manners of the age. Of those, merely by being a New Yorker, I think I may boast a certain knowledge, for surely New York offers almost as rich and varied a display of manners as it does of merchandise. It is a pretty good place, at any rate, for inspecting the latest wrinkles in behavior, the newest gadgets in prejudice, the last word in phobias. Not that I would claim for it all that one might claim for Hollywood, or for myself anything resembling a professional role. I seldom see much that is either very glittering or very gamy about New York life; this survey must scamp the half-world and the great world alike. I only know that much of the world in general grows increasingly difficult to decipher or interpret or make sense of; that all too many things in this age contradict our simplest civilized assumptions; that all too many things, for that matter, contradict one another. Our early reading prepares us for many of the contrasts in life that personal experience gradually proves to be real: the mingled decency and rapacity of the human animal, the mingled meanness and glory of the human soul. We are quite prepared, too, for all those things that contribute to the comedy of the human spectacle: the austere philosopher turned by his toothache into a monkey; the conqueror of empires turned by his wife into a mouse. But in this age, where many people see a "great" moving picture once a week who don't see a great painted picture once a lifetime; where almost everybody seems to own a car and almost nobody to own a home; in this age that brings great music into every household and cuts it off the air before it is over, or whose mechanical contraptions are outmoded in the factory before

✪ Author, editor and drama critic, LOUIS KRONENBERGER is an associate editor with Time Magazine.

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they can be introduced into the shop, the contrasts seem to me so striking as to be bewildering.

Every age looks at itself, compares itself with previous ages, and judges itself on the basis of the comparison. That is how history gets written, and that is why it keeps having to be re-written; for the age just before our own, in particular, always seems almost glaringly wrong-headed. If an age is smug, and has a Macaulay for its spokesman, it will regard all history as a mere prelude to itself. But if, as is more commonly true, an age is beset by doubts and bewildered by events, it will try, rather, to see all history as an object lesson. The difficulty, in every case, is to look at one's own time with objective eyes and yet without assuming the privileges of posterity. To try to disengage what seem the master traits of the age, to try to find the main stream of one's period, and its source of flow, dominant direction, and presumable destination—to try to find out these things remains, surely, a kind of obligation, even if it be treated a little as a game. Perhaps we tend to be wiser when we do treat it a little as a game; for what might be called the full-dress, or the hallowed and dedicated, search for truth, may well become too rigid and even self-righteous. Truth, at any rate, has nothing whatever to do with solemnity. And with most of us the wish to understand our age is only part of the need to equilibrate ourselves, to achieve an attitude, arrive at a philosophy. Whether in the end we throw up our hands or draw in our horns, we must make the trial if there is to be any meaning to the verdict.

And part of looking at one's age means labeling one's age—something that is just about as perilous as it is tempting. For, naturally, you can no more epitomize a whole era than you can indict a whole nation. You can't even bite into an age as you do into an apple, for it has not the solid, or the simple, or the unshifting qualities of an apple. But it may have some traits whereby, like an apple, it bulges too much on one side, or is too ripe or too green; it may have traits that are unique; it *must* have—though there is no assurance that we can spot them—master traits. What are the striking, the special, the so-to-speak symbolic qualities of our time? What—if, indeed, manners make the man—are our predominating manners? Wherein does 1951 differ from 1902 or 1851 or 36 B. C.? It would be very

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hard to say, and I shan't pretend to say; but I shall venture to suggest.

From among many possible descriptive labels, I shall use but two; and one I shall borrow. Mr. Auden not so long ago spoke of our age as the Age of Anxiety. An age that may be said to have begun with the concept of the inferiority complex, and that vibrates angrily now with the menace of the H bomb, will hardly bring much serenity. An age that saw an intolerable régime bring on a catastrophic war, that has produced in turn not even a nominal peace, is not likely to be an age of reassurance. It must be the cry of almost every age that it was born a little too late, or too soon. But the intellectuals of this age do have some cause for thinking that they have been assaulted and disrupted beyond the common measure. Freud has forced them to have quite unprecedented and often highly unpleasant opinions about themselves, their fathers, their mothers, their wives, their children. Marx has introduced heterodox and largely hostile opinions about their employers or employees, their near neighbors, their preachers, their presidents. And any combined attack upon the self and upon society must be profoundly disquieting. The key figure of the age has been, of course, the psychoanalyst, who has not been a very well understood figure, either. The general public has been led to regard him as a combination of priest and Pinkerton operative; so that the general public has been led to form romantically sinister opinions about him. The huge way in which he looms, moreover, is to this extent a liability: it is a reminder that we are, each of us—that conceivably we are, all of us—far from well: the man who symbolizes the cure also emphasizes the ailment. No doubt he is there to tell us that we have nothing to fear but fear, but also to point out how many odd identities, how many artful disguises, fear can have. I am so far from optimistic about today's world or tomorrow's as to be hopelessly unsure where safety, let alone salvation, lies; but there is a form of pessimism that is part of our current psychology that I consider unfortunate. Most ages that aren't completely smug tend, after observing themselves, to run themselves down. Hamlet is perhaps most neurotic, most modern, most timeless, for exclaiming "The time is

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out of joint." And if it is the great delusion of moralists to suppose that all previous ages were less sinful than their own, then it is the great delusion of intellectuals to suppose that all previous ages were less sick. However shocking the pillage, rape and murder statistics of the Middle Ages, we somehow see the inhabitants as heartily sustained by a faith in God. However widespread the excesses and pestilences of the Renaissance, we see its inhabitants as hale and whole through their faith in themselves. However incessant villainy may have been in the eighteenth century, or however endemic the vapors, we somehow see the Augustans as integrated and healthy through their faith in reason. I say again, I am far from optimistic about today's world or tomorrow's; but I suspect for all that, that lots of people in the Middle Ages or the Renaissance or the Enlightenment were quite as sick as ourselves.

Indeed, the Age of Reason might almost literally have been called the Age of Eccentrics. In the field of manners, it was the age when Chesterfield thought it vulgar to play the violin, and other aristocrats found it pleasant to watch people hanged. It was the age (if we can believe Samuel Rogers) when a lady remarked that her drawing room smelled of violets, and a gentleman replied, "Madam, that is me." It was the age when Porson, the greatest classical scholar in England, drank ink when he could not get wine; and when Admiral Byng, an hour before he was to be executed, "took his usual draught for the scurvy." Nor can we fail to note that during the Age of Reason thousands of people went painfully out of their wits at religious revival meetings; that during the Age of Reason, Swift went insane, Christopher Smart went insane, Collins went insane—and, for that matter, the King of England went violently insane. So that perhaps we, today, do not too greatly surpass all other eras in sickness of soul or mind. Beyond the fact, indeed, that ours has been genuinely an age of crises, an age of alarms, ours is an age of anxiety because we have begun to face the more unpleasant facts about ourselves—some of which we even had the acumen and fortitude to ferret out—and the more unpleasant facts about the universe. In the first flush of these revelations, we tended to become more cynical and amoral, but equally to become more tolerant. The manners of the 1920's, complicated by that social phenomenon

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known as Prohibition, became rebellious by intent and unrepressed by circumstance: there seems to be a terrible misunderstanding on the part of a great many people to the effect that when you cease to believe you may cease to behave. The manners of the 1930's, complicated by that pressure known as Social Consciousness, became at once very doctrinaire and very careless: there were presumably no two ways of doing the things that mattered, and it did not matter how you did the rest. Yet the depression years of the '30s, plagued though they were by want and menaced though they were by war, were perhaps less an age of anxiety than this is, because the '30s felt that the coming explosion would be a thunderstorm to clear the air. Today, the worst kind of perplexity is added to anxiety: the future, which a while back we were all plotting, however desperately, like a game of chess, has now become something we can only gamble on, like a game of roulette.

And this is, I think, very much the Age of Anxiety, the age of the neurosis, because along with so much that weighs on our minds there is possibly even more that grates on our nerves. Has there ever been an age so overflowing with neurotic sensibility, with that state of near-shudders, or near-hysteria, or near-nausea, much of it induced by trifles, which used to belong to people who were at once ill-adjusted and over-civilized? Has there ever before been such an assortment of people who have found such an assortment of things to set their teeth on edge? I am not speaking of the Horace Walpoles or the Hedda Gablers, the squeamish exquisites or frustrated neurotics who inhabit every age. Most people of breeding have always been—as the word always was—"jarred" by clashing colors, or scratchy pens, or rasping voices: they were neurotic, that is, to the degree that they were "esthetic." But now, and by the thousands, and with no assurance whatever that the edgier the teeth, the more raffiné the taste, people are quirky, jumpy, jittery, inwardly tense. And since, in far too many cases, we cannot set this down to their being overbred, we can only conclude that they are over-burdened. They are reacting to the pressures of a world, in itself insecure, with too aggressive techniques, and values too crass and success-loving. Physically, mechanically, modern life is on the whole a very superior mode of existence. It is noisy, very noisy in

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big cities, but it has always been very noisy in big cities: the rumble of moving carts, the clatter of colliding ones, the din of street-criers and bellringers during the seemingly idyllic times, assaulted the ear quite as unpleasantly as honking horns and screaming sirens and blasting and riveting today. Life is dirty, very dirty in big cities, but consider the coal smoke and exposed garbage of past times, not to speak of the days when London housewives poured their slops out of upstairs windows, and ditches choked with refuse and dead dogs ran down the middle of the streets. Consider the stenches that were ubiquitous for centuries and have been outlawed, really, only in our own time. Most of all, consider how much better our nerves *should* be, living as we do in an age of comparative courtesy. It is true that the high breeding and distinguished manners of a small special class have all but vanished, and that ours is an age of extremely sloppy behavior. But it is not what most past periods have been—ages of extremely arrogant, of appallingly rude, behavior. The Augustan Age that boasts a reputation for perfect breeding and supreme urbanity was in general the most high-handed, quarrelsome, insulting, slanderous, straight-out downright rude age—rude to the point of being brutal, rude to the point of being cruel—that one could well conceive. We all remember Alexander Pope's magnificent abusiveness; what we may have forgotten is how harshly he could be abused.

On the other hand, we can hardly not put in evidence that archfoe of stability and serenity—speed; we can hardly doubt that all the rush, the hurry, the headlongness of life has told on our nerves in America. It is not a difference in passion, any more than a difference in plumbing, that really distinguishes our life from that of our ancestors; it is a difference in pace. We not only travel faster than we used to, in subways rather than sedan chairs, in planes rather than on horseback. We eat much faster than we used to; we talk much faster than we used to—so much that the drawl, which once we thought rather charming, is nowadays apt to set those aforementioned teeth on edge. Certainly we get bored and blasé much faster than we used to: we have lost much of the wide-eyed interest in things that earlier ages had, but even more we have lost their capacity to *remain* absorbed. The public that waited from month

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to month in pleasurably wild suspense for the new installment of a novel by Richardson or Dickens, and waited with such intensity that the matter of Clarissa Harlowe's virtue became something like a national crisis—such a public remains incomprehensible to us who, in the same space of time, would more likely encounter Clarissa in a magazine serial, as a novel between covers, as a Reader's Digest abridgement, as a movie, as a musical, as an opera, as a ballet, as a comic strip, as a play—and very possibly as a plagiarism. And what counts more in this age of anxiety than our eating or talking or traveling or tiring of things faster than we used to, is the fact that we now succeed or fail much faster than we used to. Fame was once built like furniture—slowly, painstakingly, expensively; but then it lasted a lifetime. Once people not simply read novels, they read novelists; the new Meredith or Hardy, even the new Wells or Bennett, was a kind of obligation even when it failed to be an event. People did not simply pick courses, they picked colleges; the latest 30-year-old marvel was not quite the equal of the 200-year-old institution. They were faithful to their matinee idols during half a lifetime; they grew old, indissolubly bound to Julia Marlowe or John Drew, as one grows old with one's wife or one's husband, for better for worse, for richer for poorer. Today the few bobby-soxers who are not shamelessly fickle are flagrantly polyandrous. Byron had, of all writers, the most dazzlingly meteoric rise to fame; and even Byron was left a little breathless by waking up one morning to find himself famous. But on any morning these days, whole segments of the population wake up to find themselves famous; while, to keep matters shipshape, whole contingents of celebrities wake up to find themselves forgot. Consider only that portion of the population that has not yet attained the age of twelve. There was a time, and a fairly recent one, when you could probably count on the fingers of one hand all the famous people in the world under the age of twelve: a musical child prodigy like Hofmann or Elman, a ten-year-old boy at Harvard, a boy king, a child princess, a Daisy Ashford or a Charley Ross. Now we have movie children who earn a million dollars before you can say Jack Robinson or they can say cat; we have little Quiz Kids and other prodigies of every

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description, many of them past their peak at nine and all washed up at fourteen.

Yet the comic and satiric aspects of all this, beyond being a little crude, must give way before the real implications of such rocketing success and plummeting failure. Certainly in these days success is almost without distinction, as failure is without dignity; certainly, too, success must leave one quite as anxious as failure. For how much pride is to be had in the winning, and how much permanence goes with what is won? The technique of winning is so shoddy, the terms of winning are so ignoble, the tenure of winning is so brief; and the spectre of the has-been—a shameful rather than a pitiable sight today—casts an ominous shadow over even our sunlit moments.

Among many possible slogans that might partly express the spirit of the age, I would add to Mr. Auden's just one of my own—and one at the strict level of manners, which of course his is not. The anxieties and perturbations of our time go far deeper than the mores know how to explain. But on the surface of life, where we can only guess at times how sick people are by how strangely they act, or infer their anxieties from their absurdities, I suspect that our age is more than anything else the Age of Publicity. In terms of affecting our lives today, I think the only man fit to be compared with Sigmund Freud or Karl Marx is P. T. Barnum. After Barnum, life was to have all the charlatanry of the old-time circus, though much less of the charm. After him, it would be folly to think that good wine needs no bush. After him, things that had customarily been done for pleasure were to be done for pay; after him, there was to be less and less privacy in life, and so less and less feeling that privacy is a desirable thing. After Barnum came the press-agent and the stooge, the chatter column, the gossip columnist; and Oscar Wilde's remark that there is one thing worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about, became more and more true as it became more and more trite. After Barnum—two or three generations after Barnum—people were married at the top of ferris wheels, and spent their wedding nights in department-store

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show windows, and gave birth to children under klieg lights, and threw tremendous parties to celebrate their divorce. For Barnum had triumphed, ballyhoo had triumphed, at any rate in America; and with it we have seen something not so much vanish as become tawdry and besmirched. Along with Barnum's celebrated cynicism about the birth rate, there was his humor about, say, the Grand Egress; there was his vitality, his sense of the gaudy, his knack for the unexpected. And all this has persisted into our own time, and we still offer our own version of it today—dressing up celebrities, dressing up nonentities, in anything from adjectives to leopard skins. And we do it all in a style to prove that there is still plenty of slapdash color in American life, still plenty of energy and ingenuity and exuberance. The trouble with us in America isn't that the poetry of life has turned to prose, but that it has turned to advertising copy.

And in an age of publicity, naturally technique is all-important: the proper presentation, as the advertising world describes it; the proper packaging, as the mercantile world describes it; the phrase that will linger; the face you won't forget. Philistia, furthermore, swallows it all, loves it, imitates it. A man named Turner recently told me he had named his baby son Tommy, not as you might suppose because the alliteration pleased him, but because "Tommy Turner" is an easy name to remember, and "that would prove very useful in business." But the very publicity that dictates our habits destroys our thinking. For the great conspiracy of our time, the great bane that pretends to be the great blessing, is that nobody shall be forced, shall even be permitted, to learn the truth about anything, or the beauty or value of anything, *at first hand:* that we shall all be veritable kings in the sense that we have tasters, and veritable princelings in the sense that we have whipping boys; and that people couldn't be more willing to do our reading for us if we were blind; or more eager to cut up our culture into little pieces for us if we were babies. The directions for becoming cultured are, as it were, right on the box, and are as simple and plain as the directions for baking a cake. The wonder of our age is that everything is labeled and spotlighted, pre-shrunk, pre-digested, passed on by experts. The trouble with our age is that it is all signposts and no destination.

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It would be worse than naïve, of course, to tax the age with originating all this. It is much more a matter of degree. A certain veneration of the limelight is as old as human vanity; and the remark, "You go not to see but to be seen" has been traced as far back as Socrates and Xantippe, and might well be traced much farther. All the same, the spectacle of a fashionable first-night theater audience, with its repulsive knowingness, its nonchalant exhibitionism, its ability, in the lobby before the curtain goes up, to be as warm and gushing as a geyser; and in the theater after the show has started, to be as cold and crushing as a glacier—all this seems to be quite as much a phenomenon of our own time as a manifestation of a theater that is dead—or, more accurately, a theater that repulses most things that are alive.

Plainly, again, there were Men of Distinction acting as decoy ducks in the pleasure gardens and spas of two centuries ago; and the Art of Puffing was far advanced before the press agent had been born, or at any rate christened. Yet, in the old days, all this was small of bore, short of range, and went off with not too loud a report. Ours is pre-eminently an age of publicity because it is so well equipped to publicize: one advertising agency, one radio or TV station, can do in a day what once upon a time took months. And with everything publicized so nimbly, and packaged so smartly, and swallowed so painlessly, the outer sophistication is greater today, the enameling is smoother. No doubt people of taste and sensibility always think that their age is pre-eminently vulgar; and so in ours. Yet we may wonder whether, in the primary sense, this is so true of our own time; we can hardly help noticing that what might be called a pristine vulgarity is largely outlawed, largely gone. Gone is the worst of the Gilded Age, as expressed in mere Bigness and Muchness and Thickness and Heaviness and Richness and Newness. It was too oppressive, too indigestible. We have invented streamlining; and we have learned to put our faith in the specialist. The Age of the Specialist—in which Jones is the only possible man to consult for disorders of the left nostril, but you must have Smith for disorders of the right—is subsumed under the Age of Publicity, and could hardly exist outside it. Ours is not so much an age of vulgarity as of vulgarization; everything is tampered with or

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touched up, or adulterated or watered down, in an effort to make it palatable, in an effort to make it pay. What we need for cultural health today is what we needed and got for our physical health forty-five years ago: Pure Food & Drug Laws concerning thought and feeling. But I don't think we shall get them.

Certainly we shan't unless those of us who are mindful of the heritage that has acted as a moral and cultural constant in a world of power motives and manias, can somehow manage to influence the general population of our time. And in order to influence them, we have first to interest them. I don't know just how that is to be done: that is, I don't know how communication on a sufficiently grand scale can be set up without standards being let down; how not only intellectuals and non-intellectuals, but also the tough-minded and the flabby, or the highminded and the easy-going, are to have at least the same fundamental values. But I do know that hardly anything has been done even by way of a start. Certainly it lies with us to take the initiative and try to find a method: something more easily advocated than achieved. For if we manage to interest the general population by watering down what we have to say, there must be as much loss as gain. On the other hand, if we lack a proper sympathy, if our touch is chilly and our tone self-righteous, we shall preserve our integrity only at the expense of our usefulness. It may be that while vigorously continuing to insist that art and intellect are aristocratic, we should ask ourselves whether artists and intellectuals are not sometimes too arrogant. The problem in any case—even divorcing it from the far vaster one of world politics and economics—the problem in the realm of manners, on the plane of culture, is immensely difficult, involving as it does all the impurity, the lack of intellectual probity, the pull-two-ways by which we live and by which, I fear, we have prospered. It might be more horrifying, but it would be far simpler, if America were completely soulless and visionless, were altogether materialistic. It is a good deal more complicated because we are of so mixed a composition, so bifocal an outlook, serving God and Mammon both, and both at the same time.

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Realism and the Intellectual in a Time of Crisis*

HELEN M. LYND

> . . . Men
> Are as the time is. To be tender-minded
> Does not become a sword.

THESE WORDS spoken by Edmund as he ordered the death of Lear and Cordelia give one definition of realism. Edmund made clear what this conception excludes. He continued his mandate to the Captain:

> . . . Thy great employment
> Will not bear question . . .

and he said of himself:

> . . . for my state
> Stands on me to defend, not to debate.

Whether we regard Edmund primarily as a double-dealing villain who almost to the last allowed no human feeling to deter him from his evil course, or as a necessary instrument of history whose very ruthlessness helped to destroy an outworn past and thus to make way for the future, the problem posed by his version of realism remains: in a time of social turmoil does intelligence demand adaptation to and exploitation of the most patently powerful forces of the time without "question" or "debate"?

*This article, in somewhat different form, was given as a lecture on March 15, 1951, at the annual Phi Beta Kappa dinner at Vassar College.

✪ HELEN M. LYND, formerly a member of the Advisory Committee of the General Education Board, is faculty trustee of Sarah Lawrence College, where she teaches social philosophy. Dr. Lynd is the author of *England in the 1880's: Toward a Social Basis for Freedom* and *Field Work in College Education,* and co-author of the *Middletown* books.

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This question becomes acute for intellectuals in a time of world-wide social revolution like the present. Their peculiar vocation of question and inquiry may appear either to have no place, or to have a place only in the service of aims set by generals and commissars. The pressures upon them from groups in power, always endemic in any society, are heightened; and fear mounts as penalties for non-conformity increase. Moral and intellectual choice seems to be useless in the world of action in which they live, and support for teaching and research, and even survival, depend on making what they say and do conform to the demands of that world. Questioning of its values in terms of a more humane society can become a useless utopianism; the realism of Edmund may not bring the outcome they would desire but without it they see no means of reaching any results whatever.

It is this situation which led Malraux to say that for a thinker a time of revolution is a tragedy. It leads many American intellectuals to believe that no course is open to them except either a utopianism which can lead nowhere in a power-dominated world, or a reflection of the time, whether by support of prevailing policy or by a decision to "sit out" this period of history. The question raised here is whether, even in these exigent conditions, the intellectual may not find some other course than either self-defeating utopianism or being "as the time is."

The adoption by American teachers, research workers, and intellectual administrators of the realism of Edmund appears in key places. A significant turning point in the history of American education is marked by the report on "American Education and International Tensions" issued by the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association and approved by an overwhelming majority of the members of the Association present at its annual meeting in 1949. The signers of the report included O. C. Carmichael, William Jansen, James B. Conant, and Dwight D. Eisenhower. Their analysis of the function of education in the present world situation concludes: "If the schools develop programs that contribute to the nation's need in time of crisis . . . then education can command the support it will deserve as an *instrument of national*

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policy." (Italics mine) Even with the qualification that the schools should not "abandon their traditional purposes," the fact remains that in accepting the idea that education should become "an instrument of national policy," the authors of this report and the National Education Association have renounced the prerogative of education to independent inquiry. Press and radio comment, for the most part, gave this action enthusiastic approval, but Edward R. Murrow commented: "The purpose of education is to teach people to think in order that they may have informed views on many things including national policy. . . . The concept of education as an instrument of national policy was the dusty contribution of Mussolini and Hitler to the destruction of freedom in Europe."

The position taken by the National Education Association appears also in the March, 1951, report of one of the outstanding foundations devoted to education and research, the Carnegie Corporation of New York. After listing notable projects which it had supported, the reports concluded: "Among the recent developments on which hope may be founded is the initiative which the universities and colleges have taken in proposing universal military service, which they opposed, successfully, from 1942 until this fall. By this action, they have reasserted their leadership in the intellectual life of America."

Many college and university presidents have similarly endorsed the belief that education and research at this time should become instruments of public policy as defined by military, business or political interests. President Allen of the University of Washington in his report on the tenure cases at his university made it clear that the scholarly "pursuit of truth" must be such as not to offend the "tough, hard-headed world of affairs." *Trends*, published by the National Association of Manufacturers, has commented favorably on the advocacy by university presidents of the use of the school system for indoctrination. Mrs. Mildred McAfee Horton, former President of Wellesley, appears to view with equanimity a uniform national policy which would cause important areas of independent choice and social forces which influence choice to disappear. In urging the drafting of women, she said: ". . . Military services . . . *have a right* to as wide a basis of selection as possible." (Italics mine)

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Her article "Why Not Draft Women?" was captioned: "All the social forces which make women hesitate to volunteer for military duty would vanish if women were drafted."

If such statements were isolated or exceptional, they could be disregarded; coming as they do, as part of a trend in which loyalty oaths and political screening of teachers are accepted, and in some cases actually initiated, by university presidents, there can be little doubt that they represent a tendency to give over education to political direction—a tendency new in American life. There can be little doubt, also, that in many cases American intellectuals take this position not because they like the effects of military training on the young people they are trying to educate, or because they like the idea of a garrison state, but because they see no effective alternative to such "realism." We must be realistic, they feel, because in the present world situation attention to what ought to be done rather than what is done will, in Machiavelli's words, bring ruin rather than preservation.

Yet if utopianism is self-defeating, so also is the current practice of the realism of Edmund. The thoroughgoing utopian cuts himself off from any means of working effectively toward his ends; the thoroughgoing contemporary realist cuts himself off from any end beyond self-preservation, and, it is beginning to appear, loses even that; this contemporary realism destroys that which it would preserve.

But the choice does not lie between these two extremes, for such realism is a peculiar, limited version of realism. The difficulty with the realism of Edmund or of Machiavelli is not that it rejects the easy optimism of a utopian dream world, not that it focuses on what the time is, but that it unnecessarily constricts that focus. It does not take *what is* in its full dimensions, which include what can be. Realism which excludes the as yet unrealized possibilities of the future inherent in the present, realism which excludes the longer, enduring purposes of men, is less than full realism. Full realism includes men's dreams. Dreams need not be illusions. If utopianism which ignores what is brings ruin, it is also true that realism which denies dreams of what may be will not bring preservation. Where there are no dreams, the people perish.

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All realism must be selective. No person and no society can grasp the whole reality of any historical situation. But contemporary realism narrows its focus too exclusively to certain aspects of reality and ignores others. It biases selection in favor of an interpretation of reality based upon fear and hate, upon the limitation of possibilities, emphasizing what cannot be done. And this narrowed focus, this scarcity theory—applied to human nature, to the understanding of other peoples and our own, to diplomatic options—constantly intensifies itself. In situation after situation, American policy begins by limiting attention to what is, or is regarded as, an immediate danger, concentrating on the most obviously coercive next steps to meet that danger and allowing no wider perspectives or more dynamic possibilities to intrude. Each successive step involves a more constricted focus, more distortion of perspective, and makes the following step seem inevitable, allowing still less choice.

The loss of clear aims and of effective means of working toward any aims resulting from a too limited realism appears in foreign policy, in domestic policy, and in the role of the intellectual as he supports these policies. In each area the tendency is to allow someone else to define the situation and then to adapt to that definition. In foreign policy we wait to see what Russia will do and then try to outmaneuver her. At home, members of both parties increasingly, as was pointed out in a recent letter to the *Herald Tribune*, allow Senator McCarthy to make the rules, then accuse his opponents of having broken them, and the accused, instead of questioning the rules, merely deny having broken them. When intellectual leaders resign their traditional position of independent thought to support unquestioningly national policy, it is this acceptance of issues as defined by others that they are supporting.

In foreign policy our stated purpose is to preserve democratic freedoms. It has come to be accepted that the way to do this is to concentrate on, and oppose, the Soviet Union as the sole threat to freedom. This single focus has led us to adopt any methods, including some of those of the very state which the whole policy is designed to oppose. It has also led us to select allies in what we call the "free world", not on the basis of their practice of democracy and freedom, but on the basis of their hatred of and willingness to fight Russia.

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Both the corruption of means and the confusion of ends have been illustrated repeatedly in recent months. A *New York Times* editorial headed "Mass Murder" decries a "completely callous attitude toward human life and liberty" in China, and says, "It is simply unthinkable that thousands upon thousands of good Chinese deserve to die because of what they believe." But we engage in "Operation Killer" with the avowed purpose of killing as many Chinese as possible. General Eisenhower stated in regard to methods of warfare: "The use of the atom bomb would be on this basis, Does it advantage me or does it not . . . ? If I thought the net was on my side I would use it instantly." The *New York Times* report of the United States agreement with Franco Spain said that the Secretary of State "made it plain that the United States without reservations now placed the military strategic consideration of the defense effort above the broader political factors." A similar loss of ends in military means of attaining them appeared in a statement by Kenneth Younger in Parliament. In support of the United States position on crossing the 38th parallel, he said that it would be wrong to prejudice military resistance to aggression by forcing the commander to conform to "an imaginary line that has no significance of any kind except on the map," ignoring the logic that if the 38th parallel is an imaginary line of no significance, there never was any aggression, any reason for resistance, or any basis for UN participation in the Korean conflict. Freedom House urged: "Aid to a threatened victim of Soviet aggression can no longer be contingent upon our disapproval of his habits. . . . No impatience with an ally alters the need for his support." In pursuit of this policy we find ourselves strengthening Franco's tottering regime in power, supporting Bao Dai, Chiang Kai-shek, and Syngman Rhee, who, according to Vera Micheles Dean, are resented by the peoples of Asia as "puppets of the western powers," and, after two world wars fought to destroy militarism and fascism, making every effort to restore military power in Germany and Japan.

Such a policy leads to the question raised by James P. Warburg: "Do we want a German peace settlement on our own terms, if we can get it? Or has the cold war become an end in itself?" The *Wall Street Journal* and *Business Week* have recently expressed

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similar misgivings: "Grim warnings from the Pentagon are largely propaganda," says the *Wall Street Journal.* "What they really fear is a letdown in the arms program. . . . They want to be sure Congress will appropriate the full $61 billion. . . . Hence the scare talk." *Business Week,* likewise, urges taking the "scare talk" with a "grain of salt." The warnings, however, succeed in their immediate purpose; the *New York Times* reports on August 9, 1951 "Warning of Dim Peace Hope Speeds Arms Debate."

But if this course succeeds in getting appropriations from Congress, it does not preserve and extend freedom—its avowed aim. However great the actual threat, a policy which magnifies the danger and alienates masses of people in Europe and Asia is not good defense. This policy, confined to opposition—opposition to Russia and to communism—has tended to rob the "free world" of substance. Sagittarius of the *New Statesman and Nation* epitomizes this process:

> The exemplary reduction of Korea
> The methodical destruction of Korea
> Devastation systematic
> Brings the concept democratic
> To the backward Asiatic
> in Korea.

Can we wonder that England views with diffidence such statements as that of the eminent citizens' "Committee on the Present Danger" that we must aid England because "Great Britain would . . . be an unsinkable aircraft carrier and advance base," and that Professor Arnold J. Toynbee says that the time has come for England to declare its independence of America, or at least of American foreign policy, on the grounds of "No annihilation without representation"?

Walter Lippmann's columns of the last two years might fairly be read as a protest against the limited realism on which our foreign policy has been based, and a plea for active engagement by intellectuals in helping to develop enlarged perspective and a fresh approach. Last January 10, he wrote:

> . . . a re-examination of our policy is most urgent. I mean the policy of containment.

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On March 14 he expanded this:

. . . Clearly we are not focusing our total resources, including our resources of brain power and of heart.
. . . The State Department has for the time being run out of ideas which evoke energy, offer hope, and create confidence.
. . . the leadership we had by virtue of our ideas and our power is rapidly disintegrating. We are losing touch with peoples of the world—with their fears, their hopes, their needs, their purposes, and their will to survive—and we are not talking to them but to ourselves in a self-induced mood of defeatism and impotence.

He summarized the whole effect of this distorted realism: "There is a difference between being realistic and being pessimistic. Even in this unhappy century pessimists have now and then been responsible for some very costly mistakes." Guided by fear and pessimism alone, we form wrong judgments about the world and make the very mistakes which it is the purpose of realism to avoid.

Within the United States the same process of loss of dynamic perspective has been at work. We set out in the current loyalty program and its ramifications to preserve freedom by suppressing Communists because Communists would destroy freedom. In the process of this suppression, we are in danger of ourselves being the agents of destruction of freedom by adopting those methods of making thought serve political ends which we deplore in Communist countries. The freedom of thought which we laud as one of our national virtues is too often like that of the schoolmaster who replied to the father who wanted his son "to learn to think for himself": "We teach all our boys to think for themselves. We do even better. We teach them *what* to think for themselves." The National Education Association is now alarmed at attacks on schools which in part result from its own action in making education an instrument of national policy. We exclude from an International Congress of Chemistry held in this country this fall a dozen of the leading chemists of the world, setting up our own iron curtain, more dangerous to ourselves than to those excluded. In order to oppose a government which makes use of secret police and stool pigeons, we have come more and more to rely on our own system of anonymous informers.

For a time it seemed that the absurdity of many of the current

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attacks on freedom of thought would make them self-defeating. When Senator McCarthy's campaign began, the term most widely used to describe his activities was "antics." This has proved, tragically, too trivial a description of the climate of opinion of which he is both symptom and cause. When such men as Owen Lattimore, Philip Jessup, and Kingsley Martin, whose lives and works are a matter of open record, can be charged in America with following "a Communist line," we can no longer rely on the ludicrous nature of the charges to protect freedom.

The Government, in allowing its loyalty program to be oriented in terms of Senator McCarthy's definition of issues, has contributed to the suppression of free inquiry and thus deprived itself of the responsible intelligence on which democratic government must rely. The result is described by Alan Barth as the application of "a kind of intellectual means test under which only the indigent in ideas can qualify."

In the midst of such loss of direction, it is a sobering experience to read what Randolph Bourne wrote in 1917:

> Only in a world where irony was dead could an intellectual class enter war at the head of such illiberal cohorts in the avowed cause of world liberalism and world democracy.
>
> We have had to watch in this country the same process which so shocked us in Germany, the coalescence of the intellectual classes in support of the military program.
>
> . . . herd instinct has become herd intellect. . . . Thought is . . . any easy rationalization of what is . . . going on.

To deplore the tragic underlining of Bourne's words in the years since he wrote is not to say that the answers to the questions history now presents are easy. Only a Mr. Malik or a Mr. Austin finds all goodness on one side, all evil on the other; all truth on one side, all the big lies on the other. No country has a monopoly on morality or truth.

But if the answers are not easy, we only deceive ourselves by refusing to go beyond easy answers. However great the actual danger that threatens us, however exigent the immediate situation, nothing is gained by allowing opponents of democracy and free inquiry to define the issues, and then to confine thought and action to the

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limits thus set. Is it not precisely the obligation of the intellectual to extend the realism of the immediate, constantly to re-examine events to restore historical range and depth, to avoid the use of activity as an anodyne?

Is it historical necessity or a too ready acceptance of limitation that keeps us confined within being "as the time is"? Lionel Trilling has characterized recent decades as a period when people wanted to have "moral grandeur at small emotional expense." And Edmund Wilson has written repeatedly of the "incomplete experience of the earthly possibilities of human life" which mark such diverse writers as Aldous Huxley and Ernest Hemingway, and of the anxious preoccupation of the "whole artistic and intellectual world" with making sure that their positions are conventionally correct.

It is not impossible for us to go beyond protecting ourselves from the full impact of our historical situation. But this demands a realism which refuses to stop with the issues as "given", but which insists on examination of the complex phenomena which are subsumed under stereotypes. Victor Lowe warns against the resurgence of what William James called "vicious intellectualism," which assumes that giving a thing a name assures that the fact named "has to perfection all the characteristics which the name's definition includes. . . ." This attitude, which blocks intelligent inquiry at the start, is precisely the method which military and political realism, with increasing support of intellectuals, currently employs. We tend to use wider and looser categories, with less and less precise meaning, and less and less critical appraisal. We use such terms as "democracy," "communism," "peace," "aggression," "freedom," as if they were the end of analysis and had become self-explanatory, instead of what they should be for the intellectual: the impetus to continuing investigation of what is happening in this country and in other parts of the world, and to the search for fresh ways of approaching present problems.

Even in the limited options of the present, it is possible to find new possibilities in ways of stating the issues, and alternate courses of action, so as to make the most of and widen the options we do have. In a variety of places, this process is going on. Instead of taking

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alarm at threats to investigate a school system for subversion, and perhaps, as in the case of Pasadena, losing an able school superintendent, it is possible to take the initiative as Scarsdale did and use the professional ability in its community to resist attempts at political screening of textbooks and teachers. Instead of a loyalty program based on hunting out and eliminating Communists in government service, which, by the fear it inspires, opens too easy a road to McCarthyism and leaves no moral and intellectual weapons to fight it, it is possible to consider such an alternative as the British Civil Service plan, which survived even the Fuchs case. This plan specifically directed against sabotage and espionage excludes Communists from designated positions only, rather than from the entire Civil Service, and attempts to determine the fitness of a particular person for a particular post. Instead of deluding ourselves with an exclusive preoccupation with Russia as the sole obstacle to peace, we can develop a realism that includes a recognition and appraisal of other peoples of the world than Russia and the United States. We can make more effort to discover what their peculiar aspirations are, and how we can help them, to our common benefit. In this connection we can judge food for India or civil rights for American minorities not simply as useful or useless weapons to fight communism, but as important goals of democracy. A time of social revolution need not be a time of paralysis or defense. In such a period, the business of the intellectual is to attempt to discover what new forms of human values are coming into being, to try to distinguish the valid from the specious, and to help to bring those charged with hope to fulfillment.

Many of these attempts to discover productive ways of action amid the coercions in which we live will fail. But the unyielding effort will, even in the face of failure, help to keep open the roads to the future.

Exercise of this responsibility of the intellectual is not easy. Inquiry, innovation, creative thought must be classified as one of the hazardous occupations. When a person who had been in prison was debarred recently from speaking at New York University because "No person who has served a jail sentence is desirable as a . . . speaker to student groups," it was pointed out that this rule, if followed

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consistently through history, would have deprived students from hearing—among others—Socrates, Sir Thomas More, Bunyan, Voltaire, Thoreau, Bertrand Russell and Nehru.

Yet the honorable tradition of reaffirming independent thought continues. Edward C. Tolman and his colleagues, dismissed from the University of California for their insistence on intellectual independence, were supported by professors and professional associations throughout the country. The words with which Yale University honored Professor Tolman—and itself—in conferring on him the degree of Doctor of Science last June are symbols of a living heritage:

> Builder of strong theoretical foundations for a youthful science . . . your gifts have also served your country in its hour of need. Valiant defender of the human mind . . .

If the realism of Edmund has been recurrent in human history, so also has the realism of those who will give and hazard all they have in order to discern not only the limitations but the possibilities in the present, to widen the areas of choice and help to bring about a productive and constructive future. Such exercise of the function of the intellectual is never more important than when it demands greatest courage.

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South Africa's New Racial Order

ANNE BAUER

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION is nothing new in South Africa. For generations an obdurate system of caste has maintained in unstable equilibrium a population of over two-and-a-half million Europeans, themselves divided into English- and Dutch-speaking segments, and some nine-and-a-half-million "non-Europeans," divided three ways into full-blooded Negro "Natives," of which there are more than eight million, colored "mixed-bloods" and a small but problem-raising faction of Hindu East Indians. But now recent legislation of the Nationalist Government, amounting to a rigid enforcement act of caste—legislation for which no precedent can be found in the twentieth century, with the possible exception of Hitlerian Germany—threatens to bring South Africa's racial situation, already regarded as the world's worst, to a critically explosive danger point. In proclaiming this "new racial order," the South African government has deliberately chosen to become the bitter-end champions of white supremacy, to make the die-hard last stand of racism.

Three separate enactments—the Immorality Amendment Act, the Mixed Marriages Act and the Group Areas Act—rushed through parliament by Dr. Malan's government, are the legal base for this thoroughgoing system of caste and racist segregation. Under them, all groups are rigidly circumscribed in their economic, educational, social and cultural living in such ways that, in addition to greater restrictions for all non-Europeans, the personal and public life of every citizen, white, black, colored or Indian, is rigidly prescribed. A curious and unprecedented feature of these laws is that in ways previously inconceivable they infringe upon the personal and

✪ ANNE BAUER is a free-lance writer who has been living in Europe for the past four years. She has contributed articles to various European periodicals and newspapers and is currently Paris correspondent for the *Mombasa Times*. This article is the result of a recent three months' tour through South Africa.

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private lives of the dominant white group. For example, under the Immorality Amendment Act, "illicit carnal intercourse between Europeans and non-Europeans and other acts in relation thereto" becomes a criminal offense punishable with imprisonment up to four and five years for women and men respectively, if the participating parties belong to different color groups.

The original Immorality Act was enacted in 1927, but was never strictly enforced; indeed, it fell into ridicule when in several cases a native woman was found guilty and sentenced to hard labor, while the man, a European, was adjudged not guilty. The present Act, however, in addition to a double set of legal teeth, enlarges the scope of the ban by substituting for "Native" the phrase "all non-Europeans," thus including the Union's extensive "Colored" population as well as the Indian and Malay groups. The present regime has also made it quite clear that it is determined to enforce the law rigorously. The day it was passed, May 30, 1950, thousands of official leaflets were distributed in Cape Town's Table Bay Harbor, warning foreign seamen of the new Act. Its first victim was one Ernest Hicks of Truro, Cornwall, a British sailor with a "fine record both in peace and war," as the Court itself noted. He was on his first trip to South Africa, stated that he knew nothing about the law, but was sentenced to four months' hard labor for consorting with a "Colored" woman.

C. R. Swart, incumbent Minister of Justice, proclaims that the bill is "necessary to the continued existence of the white population." A few cases can vividly illustrate the odd combination of tragedy and absurdity involved. In September an elderly couple, the man a European, were convicted, after an early morning arrest at their domicile, on evidence obtained by a window-spying policeman. In another case, a couple was brought to court because the arresting officer "thought the woman had high cheekbones and must be a non-European." But the woman defendant in this case was able to satisfy the court by baring her arm to show her skin color. In a third case in Swellendam, Cape Province, a colored man of thirty-four and a European woman of thirty-eight who had been living together as common-law partners for fifteen years and had three children, received suspension of jail sentences, but were ordered not to con-

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sort in future. A December communiqué from the Attorney General's office promised leniency for couples of different races who had lived together as man and wife for "a long time before the promulgation of the Immorality Act," but this vague dispensation is entirely discretionary with the individual prosecutor. It will hardly alleviate the untold hardship already caused, and certainly not that yet to be felt as a result of the legislation.

In fact recently a European man and a colored woman, arraigned as offenders, pleaded that they wished to marry. They had one child and expected another. But since the passage of the Mixed Marriages Law, marriage between Europeans and non-Europeans is outlawed. Such marriages cannot be solemnized, and when performed are to be declared void, with the marriage officer who knowingly performs them subject to a fine and possible revocation of license. An administrative directive stipulates that in case of doubt about racial classification, the suspected person must submit proof. Paradoxically, birth certificates are not sufficient proof. This is in line with the oddly worded "definitions" of the several race groups laid down by the authors of both acts. By their criteria "European" is a "person who in appearance obviously is, or who by general acceptance and repute is a European"; the wording is similarly stated for "non-Europeans." And any person accepted as either, "as the case may be, shall for the purposes of this Act be deemed to be such until the contrary is proved."

These definitions are obviously difficult both legally and administratively. A Reverend Thomas L. Gill, brought to court in Cape Town on March 2, 1950, on charges of violating the act, stated that he had married the couple in good faith, since the woman appeared to be European. It turned out that although born of a European mother, employed as white and accustomed to attending dances, cinemas and social events among Europeans, the woman in question had a non-European father, long deceased. Three weeks after the Gill trial, an Anglican priest in Natal resigned in protest his appointment as a marriage officer. The Bishop of Natal, the Reverend L. N. Fisher, stated: "I think the Mixed Marriages Act is utterly stupid and completely unworkable." The Archbishop of Cape Town also commented: "There are families in which one child is obviously

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European and habitually consorts with Europeans; another, obviously non-European, consorts with non-Europeans. A marriage officer will be breaking the law if he marries the former to a non-European and equally so if he marries the latter to a European. . . . It is not clear what kind of proof is required to establish the fact that a person habitually consorts with Europeans or non-Europeans. If the State wants to render criminal all sexual intercourse between persons of different races, it ought to have a more scientific method of determining race. This apparently the State will not do. I am not surprised, for clearly it would involve far more people in a vexatious inquisition, and many would-be voters. But without such action, it is difficult to believe the sincerity of the profession that the legislation is dictated by a real concern for race purity."

The question has provoked a grave difference between, on the one hand, the Dutch Reformed Church, backing the Nationalist Government, and, on the other, the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Protestant Unitarian Churches. The Anglican Synod strongly denounced the implicit refusal of marriage and the enforced separation of parents and children, as well as the dilemma in which the Act places ministers of religion, compelling them either to disqualify themselves as marriage officers or to function as instruments of a policy some regard as inconsistent with the will and law of God. The Synod declared: "The Church is against all illicit intercourse; but a couple living in sin should not be denied the opportunity of expiation by conversion of an unhallowed union into one sanctified by Divine blessing." Another cleric, the Reverend Mr. Ratter of the Unitarian Church, comments even more outspokenly: "Character is more important than color. South Africa is creating a society curiously reminiscent of Hindu caste. If the white mind cannot accept the colored, yellow and black, as equal, the verdict of history will go against the white. One fact is sure—God is color-blind."

The Group Areas Act is designed as a capstone for this new order of caste in South Africa. In unprecedented ways it further implements a policy of strictly compartmentalized segregation. Even in a society that has for generations practiced unsystematic segregation its application promises to be drastic and revolutionary. Under

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this act, the three groups—native blacks, "colored" or "mixed-bloods," and white Europeans—must not only reside in separate townships or settlements, but members of different races, with the exception of domestic-servant members of households, are strictly excluded from any area not prescribed by law. Only as "visitors" are they permitted to come into other areas, and then for a period not exceeding ninety days. In present practice residential segregation is quite strict. In Johannesburg, the city's 470,000 natives live in six or seven townships or "locations" set aside for their exclusive use. But one of the purposes of the new regime is to consolidate native residential areas, now scattered in several sections, some in the midst of white residential quarters, into one large self-contained territory. So administered—and there is little doubt of the present Government's determination in this respect—there will follow forced shifting of mass groups to fresh locations, including the eviction of owners from their property, should it be in an area set aside for a different racial group. Close study of the Act reveals these and a great many other formidable complications. The climax of contradiction is reached in the extension of race character to businesses and corporations, which are classified according to the race group of the persons holding controlling interest. Theoretically a company might be "tainted" with the disqualifications of several groups, but the law, recognizing by implication that most of the potential private capital for housing is in the white group, stipulates that occupancy and ownership may be held by different racial groups.

Of course, one of the ulterior purposes of the scheme is to force as many natives as possible back to the native Reserves. These territories represent about 20 per cent of the total available land and, according to a prewar census, about half the native population reside on reservations. However, this proportion is probably considerably less at present, since there has been constant migration to the cities and the large farm estates. Therefore, outside the zealots of the Nationalist Party, a consensus of intelligent opinion regards the Group Areas Act as utterly unworkable on economic grounds alone. For the two gravest questions are hard economic ones: who will bear the cost of huge municipal housing projects if entire population groups are to be suddenly shifted, and how can industry and agriculture obtain

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their needed supply of cheap unskilled labor if there is to be a large-scale movement back to the Reserves?

The Nationalist Government, ignoring such complications, has taken a debonair, patriarchal view of the situation. Mr. Van der Heerer characteristically explains: "In the Reserves, the Natives will be among their own people. Each race likes to live among their own; that goes for the English and the Afrikander as well. We want to reeducate the Native in the consciousness, pride and tradition of his race." The Natives have naturally shown little appreciation of such special concern. In fact, they have staged huge protest demonstrations against the bill, and through their most important representative body, the African National Congress, have explicitly denounced the Group Areas Act.

Vehement protest has also come from South Africa's Indian population, most of them residents of Natal province, and it is because of Indian reactions that the question is now formally before the United Nations. Present indications, however, are that the South African government is unready to accept what it calls "outside interference" with its risky racist policies. It has already taken first steps toward implementing the legislation by appointing local advisory boards to draft the boundaries for the various groups. Thereafter the government will proclaim specific areas white, black or colored, and thus start converting the country into a vast jig-saw puzzle of racial zones on the basis of this threefold color distinction.

One of the further consequences of this separatist movement is increasing tension between the English and Dutch segments of the white population. Although the Union is officially bilingual, the Afrikaan populace is moving toward belligerent assertion of its mores and culture. More Afrikanders are bilingual by reason of the restricted currency of their native language, and in government service and other ways they are pushing for dominance in political and cultural affairs. The political divide between Dr. Malan's Nationalist Party and the United Party, formerly led by the late Marshal Smuts, runs roughly parallel to the language line. Over against the solid ultraconservative phalanx of the Afrikanders, this loose coalition of moderate conservatives and liberals has little effectiveness. Education and religion increasingly threaten a division tantamount

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to a cultural feud between the two. Although by reciprocity the second language is taught in all schools, the children of Afrikaans-speaking families attend Afrikaans schools, while the English element go to schools of their own. This practice, under a statute of 1920, was until recently never enforced to a point where the state interfered with the parents' choice of education for their children. Now, since the Nationalist Government's rise to power in 1948, strict enforcement has become the rule, and it has been extended to private as well as public schools, threatening the basic unity of South African society and the solidarity of the European elements themselves.

Much of this is the sequel of racist doctrine dominating civil policy and administration. Of course, the chief victims of such reactionary beliefs are the eight-and-a-half million blacks. Although they are the base of the labor supply, upon which rests the country's most productive industries of gold and diamond mining, the main source of domestic, farm and unskilled manual labor, they are cut off from economic improvement by the industrial color bar and trade union exclusion. The Native cannot own a house or the ground on which it stands in urban areas. The Native "locations" are vast slum districts lacking adequate sanitation, comforts and recreational facilities. Educational facilities are woefully inadequate, with not even compulsory *primary* education. In March, 1950, the Minister of Education admitted in the Assembly that nearly 66 per cent of Native children between the ages of seven and seventeen did not attend school. Family stability is undermined by a regulation that forbids a man to bring his wife from the Reserves to a location until he can show two years of steady employment.

A migrant labor group of some half-million Natives, one-fourth to one-fifth of the native urban population, work under mining contracts ranging from eleven to fourteen months and are herded into controlled "compounds" from which women are excluded. Their holidays on Sundays in towns where sports and entertainment are banned on Sunday naturally result in orgies of vice, drunkenness and exploitation. The estimated three million Natives employed on white farms outside the Reserves live in a state of semi-bondage. In Natal, each Native has to work 180 unpaid days a year to pay for

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the roof over his head. His contract binds his wife and his children under eighteen years of age to the same obligation. Yet on the Reserves themselves, with impoverished, eroded soil and antiquated farming methods, there are hardly resources enough to support the overcrowded population, not to mention the many others whom the new settlement policy contemplates driving from the cities. Such is the present and prospective gravity of the Native situation.

Yet to all this is now added the strain of the new restrictions and displacements. A small liberal minority, of course, is concerned with the problem, urging now practical and now moral considerations. The Institute of Race Relations, a private organization, has for twenty years tried to ease tensions and foster better race relations. It submitted last September to the Department of Native Affairs a constructive minimum program, whose main points were farm training, compulsory schooling, Native ownership of housing and the legal recognition of African trade unions. Mrs. Margaret Ballinger, a prominent liberal representing the Natives in the House, has asked through the years for an increase in Native land allotments, stabilization of the Native urban population, the relaxing of the industrial color bar, increased school facilities and pay raises which would insure a rise in the Native standard of living. All pleas have met with no substantial recognition, and with official resentment of her bold principle of "the abandonment of the master-servant relationship as the sole basis of contact between European and African and a positive integration of the African into the South African community, in place of the partial integration which, forced upon him, has imposed the burdens of Western civilization without any of its privileges."

But instead of gradual improvement and progressive planning, the official South African answer is increasingly restrictive segregation, at whatever costs of social upheaval, economic stagnation, injustice, moral stultification and international disrepute. The obvious fanaticism at work promises to obscure for a considerable time the shortsightedness, the inhumanity and the self-injury which the whole community must eventually suffer from and pay for. Such stubborn intransigence may well precipitate the last crucial historical test of the irrational self-contradictions of racism.

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Tropical Adaptation: A Revaluation

EARL PARKER HANSON

IN THE VAST BODY of literature on the general subject of adaptation to the tropics, only one quality is always present like an unbroken thread: the quality of inconclusiveness and contradiction, mounting toward chaos.* No two ages in history agree on the subject; in any one age, no two observers agree; those individual observers who have built up complex schemes of thought on the general subject are easily proved to be enmeshed in a tangle of contradictions.

Today we find that the humid tropical climate apparently reacts in one way on white men and in quite another on colored peoples; those who would explain that phenomenon must postulate essential differences between white and colored peoples which are denied by our leading ethnologists and sociologists. The climate seems to react in one way on white sojourners, in another on white settlers who have their work done for them, and still another on white settlers who do their own work. It reacts in one way on colored people who still retain their indigenous cultures, as for instance in the Amazon basin, and in another on those colored people who have been stuffed into overalls for the purpose of becoming cheap labor in that bastard cultural invention called colonialism.

In all cases, differences go hand in hand with differences in *cultural* adaptations, either voluntary or forced. However, when we

* I want to express my appreciation to my colleague, Douglas H. K. Lee, who has made tropical adaptation his specialty, because, as he announced in the Johns Hopkins catalogue, most of our former widely accepted (and in some circles still current) beliefs constitute "a body of mythology."

This article was presented as a paper at the annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers in March, 1951.

EARL PARKER HANSON, now chairman of the department of geography and geology at the University of Delaware, has traveled in all parts of the Amazon basin for the Carnegie Institution of Washington and for the Army Engineers. Mr. Hanson has been active in planned development in such tropical areas as Puerto Rico and Liberia, and is the author of the recently published book, *New Worlds Emerging*.

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study the techniques of those who postulated for us the effects of climate on man, we find that nearly all of them (including many worthy physiologists working during and since World War II), ignored culture in the broadest sense, and so actually dealt with men who have never yet existed on this earth. They sought to learn lessons from people who were presumed to live in a social and economic vacuum. There never have been such people anywhere, at any time.

The tropical diseases which are often said to prevent the economic growth and well-being that is today everywhere in the air for the so-called underdeveloped areas, also vary in seriousness with cultural adjustment. They are one kind of problem for the so-called wild Amazon Indians, and quite another for those Indians, and African Negroes, who must earn their living at from ten cents to twenty-five cents per day as colonial subjects and workers. They are one problem for white sojourners and settlers who are surrounded by large bodies of underpaid, colored workers, and quite another for the white residents of tropical Queensland. Malaria was a serious social problem for the Puerto Rico of ten years ago; it is no social problem at all for modern Puerto Rico, with rising standards of living and a greatly increased budget for public health. While some environmentalists claim some mystical and inviolable correlation between climate and disease, public health experts claim (and prove again and again) that public health is a purchasable commodity the means for which can be attained through those cultural readjustments that are reflected in social and economic growth. To claim, as even some geographers still do, that tropical diseases prevent the cultural and economic growth that provides the means for combating and even eliminating those diseases, is to ignore history and to indulge in a dog-chasing-his-tail argument.

Those authorities who deal with tropical agriculture are as sharply divided as are all the rest. Some see agriculture as something that can miraculously stand by itself in human affairs, and are quite pessimistic. Others see agriculture as part of the general economic scene, intimately and indissolubly tied in with industry and trade, and are optimistic. Some make broad generalizations about tropical soils, and condemn them on the basis of those generalizations; others realize

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that there are wide variations in tropical soils, leading to equally wide variations in potentialities. While several soil experts condemn tropical soils because temperate region techniques and crops do not seem to do well there, others are busily developing agricultural techniques better suited for the tropics. In the Amazon basin, agriculture is one thing on the vast flood plains of white water rivers, and quite another on the forested uplands. It is one thing with one crop, and quite another with another. It is one thing in the prevailing rather primitive economy, and quite another where economic and industrial development provides markets and makes fertilizers, tractors, technical experimentation and technical education possible.

These examples of prevailing conflict are only a few out of many. They can be multiplied indefinitely. From them, and from the fact that prevailing thought on adaptation to the tropics has changed through the centuries with changes in cultural orientations, we can draw the conclusion that *there is no knowledge about such adaptation in general. There are only opinions, which are culturally determined.*

There is a parallel to the foregoing which seems valid and which has the great strength of having validity as a working principle: *The problem of adaptation to the humid tropics is, always has been, and probably always will be, entirely a cultural problem.*

These reflections bring us back to the paper that Robert Platt presented to the A.A.G. some years ago, to the effect that environmentalism has no place in geographical thought. For environmentalism, when it draws correlations between man's life and the natural environment over which man has no control, is a form of fatalism which tends to rob man of the power to shape his own destinies through the application of his technology. Fortunately, however, that form of fatalism is today defeating itself. It is getting itself into the ridiculous position of proving impossible the things that are actually going on. Too often have I, as a field technician, been in the position of following lines of action which had been proved futile by environmentalist arguments—but turned out to be successful nevertheless. In too many places today do we see tremendous efforts, such as Puerto Rico's Operation Bootstrap, which can easily be proved impossible or impracticable by the writings of a long line

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of environmentalists who derived from Ellsworth Huntington's earlier work, and of their modern spiritual descendant, William Vogt.

However Huntington may have changed in his later years, he remained all his life an environmentalist, and in the scheme of thought expressed in his most famous and influential book, *Civilization and Climate*, he was in effect one of the great apologists for colonialism. I am, of course, aware that he has lost much of his former influence on geography—although, to read such mystics as Toynbee, he seems still to have considerable influence in other fields, and among men who may be excused for accepting uncritically what was once labeled and widely accepted as geography. But it is not enough for us to turn our backs on Huntington. When we begin to reject a philosophy that no longer works, we are at the same time forced to develop a new one that at least shows a promise of working.

That is harder. But why should we do it? Because we are living in a world and an age in which tremendous new forces are at work —geographic, political, economic, social and cultural. We are living in the midst of a modern renaissance, a regrouping and an intellectual reshaping, to which we geographers must adjust ourselves and our thinking, whether we like it or not, whether we approve or not, whether we believe it possible or not. When Governor Muñoz Marín of Puerto Rico said that colonialism is obsolete and is disappearing rapidly from the face of the earth, he said only that our Western world is today beginning a tremendous new and complex expansion toward the North and South, with people, capital, technology and those democratic political institutions that can rest solidly only on the physical institution known as the reasonably full stomach. The current industrial revolution in Latin America, new developmental and educational programs in colonial Africa, the independence of India, Pakistan and Indonesia, and such movements as Britain's ambitious Colombo Plan, indicate how actively at work, at least in the world to the south of us, are the staggering geographical movements called for in President Truman's Point Four.

And this movement is going on, not because we geographers

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thought it a good idea, but because the world is today in a state of revolution, in which a billion colored people demand something far better than they have had before, or threaten to move their allegiance to the other side of the Iron Curtain.

Since the movement is in essence a great and complex new geographical movement, undreamed of a few decades ago, it also necessitates a complete re-examination and revision of many of our former basic premises. I believe that Isaiah Bowman was thoroughly aware of that when he made his last, and perhaps greatest, public speech at Rutgers University. There he said first that our world must now help its colonial colored subjects to attain higher standards of living, and, later, that geography is a changing subject.

How it changes is made obvious by the fact that modern trends make not only Huntington obsolete, but also much of Bowman himself. The great work on the pioneer fringe that he and his associates did, twenty years ago, has already been outstripped by the modern Point Four trend. To Bowman of that day, the world's frontiers were a relatively few small empty areas, lying on the physical or social fringes of the industrialized societies. Today a frontier is any region, empty or overcrowded, in the Amazon basin or the slums of Singapore, in the Gold Coast or Pakistan, which does or may come into play in the general worldwide movement toward raising the standards of living of the world's underprivileged.

To Bowman of twenty years ago, the pioneer movement was solely an agricultural movement, moving outward from the fixed and apparently inviolable industrial regions. Today it is a movement aimed at raising standards of living by any or all means—and eventually through the integrated application of agricultural, industrial, educational, political, economic and many other techniques.

To Bowman, pioneers were exclusively white men who took lands away from indigenous populations and as often put those populations to work as cheap labor. Today, except in a few such areas as South Africa and certain parts of our own South, pioneers are all people of whatever color who demand the opportunity to improve their lots in life, regardless of whether through internal development, or emigration, or both.

Thinking partly in Huntingtonian terms, and largely about white

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farmers from the world's developed areas, Bowman could dismiss such lordly potential frontiers as the Amazon basin on the grounds that white settlers would not want to go there in the first place and, if they did go there, would not be able to get along without an abundance of cheap colored labor. Today, pending the solution of certain stubborn political problems, the Amazon basin, as large as the United States, is again being considered—and even developed in a small way—as a new area for settlement and integrated social and economic growth, on the basis that human migrations, other things being equal, always follow the path from a low standard of living toward the promise of higher, regardless of the nature of physical environment.

Those geographers (and there seem still to be some) who once believed mistakenly that no great civilizations have ever arisen in the tropics, and that therefore none can, must now begin to reorient their thinking. Our job today is not to envisage and evaluate some future tropical climax-culture which has never yet existed, and cannot exist, outside of the crystal ball. Our job is to do our part, as geographers and as citizens, toward the improvement of life in the tropics and everywhere else. I know of no geographer who considers such improvement impossible; and once we deal in those terms, the question of some future climax-culture becomes unimportant. For who among us can say where improvement, once begun, shall end?

My colleague at Delaware, Dr. Herbert Dorn, recently said that his field of economics too often tends to lose sight of the fact that its basic working materials are and always must be *human beings and their problems*. The same applies to all the social and physical sciences, and certainly to geography.

When the fellahin of Egypt, the peasant of India, the tribesman of Liberia, the caboclo of the Amazon basin, the jibaro of Puerto Rico, raises his voice for more and better food, education and opportunity for himself and his children, he raises complex social and technological problems which decidedly concern us as geographers. We do neither him nor ourselves nor our society a favor if we continue to write off those problems and dismiss the caboclo's troubles as being caused by the poor quality of the tropical soils,

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or some mysterious influence of the tropical climate, which, according to some schools of thought, seems to react independently on human energies and capabilities, regardless of such things as nutrition, sanitation and those social, economic and psychological factors which determine a man's opportunity and incentives to work for his own betterment and advancement.

I mentioned William Vogt and should like here to digress a bit. I am aware that in advocating rapid economic expansion aimed at improving standards of living in the tropics I seem to argue against the currently popular Vogt school of demographers and conservationists, who postulate the twin bogeymen of overpopulation and soil erosion as the prices we must inevitably pay for conscious efforts to improve human existence. They seem unaware that adequate soil conservation practices, and adequate efforts toward limiting population growths, can come *only* as results of the economic development, which, while raising standards of living, also provides the needed tools, the technology, the budgets, the educational facilities, the incentives which make conservation and the limitation of population growths possible—just as they did in the United States.

The chaos existing in the generalized field of tropical geography seems to indicate that in our studies of the tropics we have in the past departed too often and too far from another of geography's great sayings: that regionalism is the crowning *upshot* of geographical thought. If the problems of the humid tropics are to be regarded, as they must be, as challenges for action through the application of social, political, economic *and* technological techniques (you will notice that I say *and*, and not *or*), then we must also realize that each region of the tropics presents problems that are different from those presented by all others—not only because of variations in climate or soils, but in addition, political, economic, social, historic, cultural variations, and many more, each interacting with all the others. And if regionalism, or the optimum understanding of any one region under consideration, is to be the crowning *upshot* of geographical thought, then we must also be prepared to take our working materials where we find them, and not allow ourselves to be bound by the artificial limits and compartmentalizations of our discipline. Otherwise we may soon find ourselves echoing the

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agonized cry that Henri Bergson raised about his own field of biology. "In vain we force the living into this or that one of our molds. All the molds crack. They are too narrow, above all too rigid, for what we try to put into them."

All this leads me to the firm personal conviction, gained through twenty-five years of intermittent field work in the outlying parts of the world's tropical, desert and sub-arctic regions, that there is and can be no such thing as tropical geography except in the sense that one man may want to specialize in one kind of region and another in another. There is only one geography. That is human geography expressed through regionalism. Regions vary widely, not only within the tropics but everywhere else as well, but man is essentially the same everywhere in his constant struggle for material, cultural and spiritual improvement. And if we, as geographers, would strive to understand those problems in line with our chosen general and basic viewpoints, we must treat each region as a living entity, a living whole, which dies, like all living things, the minute it is dissected and divided into specialized compartments. We must learn a lesson from the physiologists, each of whom applies himself to the diligent study of this or that part of the human anatomy, only to discover in the end that the entity called man behaves quite differently from the arithmetical sum of its component parts.

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The European Image of Americans

SIDNEY ALEXANDER

"Voilà!" exclaims my friend, pointing to the sign at the excavation pit. "Nowhere else in the world would such a sign be possible!"

The sign reads: BLANK BUILDING—30 STORIES—READY FOR OCCUPANCY JUNE 1, 1952.

Ready for occupancy June 1, 1952! Now there is only a hole in the ground. I look up at the untenanted air. You can already rent spaces. The foundations have not yet been laid, yet you can already rent spaces—in fact, you had better—in that castle in the air.

"But of course," my friend says with an urbane little smile, "that is typical of you Americans. You rent spaces in a future that hasn't even been built. That's because you're always sure the building will be built. You are—forgive me—optimistic as only adolescents can be. You possess such endless sources of energy. You are so practical. . . ." And he continues listing some of our more attractive national traits—our friendliness, our naïveté, our exuberance. The catalogue invariably ends with: ". . . but of course you have no *culture*."

Now, my European friend is not using the word culture as, let us say, an anthropologist might: without value-judgments, and meaning simply the total pattern of one society as contrasted with that of another. For by such definition, every nation—even the U.S.A.—must have a culture. Nor, unlike the Russians, does my friend consider the frequency of shaving or the brushing of teeth or air-conditioning as elements in a culture. No, my friend is talking about—though it is almost impossible to pin him down—what are called the spiritual achievements of mankind, although it is not unusual to find good cooking and techniques of love-making listed among these spiritual achievements.

✪ During the year and a half he spent in Europe and Israel, SIDNEY ALEXANDER wrote *The Celluloid Asylum*, a novel, and *The Marine Cemetery*, an adaptation from Valéry. He is also the author of several books of poems, numerous short stories and a prize winning play, *Salem Story*.

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For more than a hundred and fifty years, visiting Europeans have taken us to task for our lack of culture. Now, one could, throughout our infancy and pimple-on-the-face stages, accept some of this criticism in good faith, though we were never so utterly isolated from our European cultural origins as the visiting (and well-paid) lecturers liked to believe. There is a slight note of irritation in the statesman-philosopher-musician Jefferson's description of himself in Paris as a ". . . savage from the mountains of America." One wonders how many French peasants could read Greek, Latin and Hebrew, as did a surprising number of our early nineteenth-century New England farmers. Thoreau, Emerson, Whitman and Melville—four giants who lose no cubit of their stature by comparison with contemporary Europeans—were writing and dreaming while now-forgotten continentals admired our political system and pooh-poohed our learning.

Yet there was, inevitably, in a young sprawling frontier society, much that made old Europe's observations valid. We were setting up such an infernal racket with our hammers and saws and longhorn rifles that only visitors with unusually sensitive ears could hear the scratching of our pens.

Comparing cultural bank-accounts is silly. What we have achieved, our literature, music, painting—with all its triumphs and its weaknesses—is our contribution to a continuous trans-Atlantic cross-fertilization. Nothing is more nonsensical than the familiar remark of patronizing Europeans, "Oh, well, you have just *borrowed* from us." Of course, we have borrowed. All culture is born of borrowing. We all deposit loans in our own accounts, and pay back in new-minted coin. The Renaissance Italians borrowed from the Romans who had borrowed from the Greeks who had borrowed from the ancient Indian Vedas and Egyptian mythology. The Elizabethans borrowed from the Italians and the French. The French borrowed from Teutonic and Latin civilizations. Paris became a cultural center because it was full of non-Parisians. We are all eternally in debt to each other.

Of course, the European sense of cultural superiority is nothing new. But today one discerns a sour note in the old song. As Louis Galantière recently put it, "They are humiliated by the thought that

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they must seek help at our hands, and they console themselves in their humiliation by the comforting thought that their culture is superior to ours." Which is very much like the schoolboy wiping his bloody nose and whimpering, "Well, maybe you can lick me, but I'm *smarter*."

Unfortunately, in this kind of a world, neither we nor the Europeans can afford the luxury of sneering at each other. Even cultural attitudes have become factors in the present world struggle. The search for allies in hot, cold or lukewarm wars is affected even by such intangibles as English iambic pentameter vs. French Alexandrians. By now, certainly, it is a commonplace that guns and dollars are not enough. No well-tossed grenade ever destroyed a bunker in the mind's terrain. Nor can dollars penetrate (though their penetrating power is immense) to the ultimate recesses of conviction. We cannot *buy* European respect. But if we, on our part, are responsible for making available to the peoples of Europe a true picture of America, the Europeans, certainly, are responsible for making some effort to evaluate that picture with balance and candor.

It is easy enough for us to discount Soviet (and Soviet-inspired) invective against our "chewing-gum cocacolization." We know that this invective is calculated, and could, overnight (as in June, 1941), transform us again from devils to angels.

But more disturbing is the persistence of stereotypes in the minds of people who should know better. One may question the critical objectivity of those non-communist West Europeans who are using their culture as a consolation in present sorrow rather than as an ever-renewing fount of creativity.

For more than a year and a half abroad I heard variations on this theme from intellectuals and concierges, from Italians and Germans and Britons and, of course, from the French. We're stronger, but they're smarter.

I praise the BBC Third Program for its fine classical music and general high-level programming. "But of course you have nothing like that in America," says my hostess with absolute assurance. A Hungarian by birth, a British subject for the past decade, she has never been to America. "Well," I say, "unfortunately, on a nationwide scale, we do not. But we do have two stations in New York

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City that play classical music almost all day long." She frowns in disbelief. "I'm sure nobody listens."

"I listen."

"Oh, well, you're not typical."

Who is typical? The Swell Guy, flamboyantly cravated, dollar-laden, grinning, propelled like a jet plane by the turbine of a fat cigar. He is Typical.

And whenever—all too often—such Swell Guys are encountered among the annual American tourist inundation, the stereotype is only confirmed. The American who is—let us be modest—as cultured as his dollar-hungry hosts is always the exception.

At first I was greatly flattered to learn that I was an Exception. Then I discovered that all my friends were also Exceptions. So they had been informed. We made up quite a horde of Exceptions.

But of course America is composed of Exceptions. What are we, overwhelmingly, if not a nation of European Exceptions? sons and daughters of those who have broken from the orbit of ancient folkways? Disrupt an electron from its orbit and you get a release of energy, an explosion. America is the released energy of disrupted peoples. We are all DP's. The price we pay for our gain of energy is inevitably a loss of homogeneity, and hence of style. One witnesses the same phenomenon in Israel today.

And yet even in Israel . . . "Install a piano in an Austrian home and the child runs his fingers over the keys. Install it in an American home and the boy lifts up the soundboard to find out how it works." This remark was smilingly made to me by an Israeli, originally of Vienna. He shared the European attitude toward Americans. A government public information man, he remained behind in the car as a British correspondent and I went up to visit an All-American agricultural settlement in Galilee, though he had accompanied us on all our other visits. "Oh, I'm sure you'll find a pressure cooker in the kitchen," he said ironically.

We did. And an inter-com system between the windswept huts. And a library of three thousand good books. "What did I tell you?" said the government guide when we returned. He mentioned the pressure cooker. I mentioned the books. "Oh, I'm sure they never *read* them."

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Do I dare tell a Parisian that our symphony orchestras are superior to his? "Naturellement," he replies. "You have *bought off* our best artists."

"Your bookshops are filled with Faulkner, Hemingway, Steinbeck, Dos Passos. Your writers and the young novelists all over Europe have been imitating American models for the past thirty years."

"That doesn't prove America has a culture. Your novelists only offer more vivid evidence of the barbarism that still exists in your country. And the writers are themselves barbarians, talented I'll grant, but hardly what I would call cultured."

So the doctor is diseased because he deals with disease. The scalpel that our literature has probed into the darker and more unsavory aspects of American life is taken as prima facie evidence of our overall decay.

Nor, to my experience, does the stereotype crumble upon impact with reality. For the special quality of a stereotype is its imperviousness to facts. Since it was not shaped of experience to begin with, fresh experience will do little to reshape it. Even Europeans resident in the United States for many years continue to look upon us as jovial gorillas.

I have a French neighbor whose employment takes him on periodic trips across the country. During his residence here he has seen far more of the United States than have most Americans. I question him about cultural activities in what he likes to refer to as Les Provinces (anywhere out of New York City), and my friend shrugs his shoulders:

"What culture? I have been looking for eight years and I find no American culture."

"Culpa tua," I reply. My friend does not know that Texas has symphony orchestras as well as Stetsons. He might even deny that the astonishing proliferation of symphony orchestras in America has anything to do with culture. To my neighbor, I suspect, culture means a familiar pattern of cafés, leisurely living, good food, old churches, and the crustacean conviction of the Frenchman that all things contained within the Gallic shell are superior to the unfortunates outside. Thus, a café in Lyons is culture, an orchestra in Dallas is not. Je m'en foutism is culture but optimism is not. An ancient

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monastery in Normandy is culture but an *avant-garde* art gallery in Minneapolis is not.

"Oh, I'll grant you have a *civilization*," remarks a Polish girl who has been in the U.S.A. for seven years. "But not a culture."

"What is the difference?" I ask, expecting the Spenglerian definition.

She struggles to explain her vague feelings. I gather that culture has something to do with age. We are not surrounded by sufficient mementoes of the past. We have no tradition. Our stones don't breathe of Carolingian epochs or Attilian invasions. We're just too damned young.

"But then," interjects an American writer in the company, "the Greece of Sophocles was not cultured, but the Greece of Metaxis is. How long must one wait? Two hundred years? Three hundred? When do you draw the magic line?"

The girl smiles. "You're not old enough," she repeats stubbornly.

By her definition, culture is like certain wines or cheeses—it gets better as it gets older.

Another European friend of mine discerns a national trait of pyromania among us. Every time she sees a flaming trash basket, she summons up the ghosts of Nordic pyres. The trash basket has usually been set afire by a cigarette carelessly tossed by one of the Puerto Rican, Ukrainian, or Italian pure Nordics in my neighborhood. It doesn't matter. To my friend, we Americans are all Anglo-Saxons and hence coldblooded Nordics who like to dance around fires.

What can we do about these steretotypes? The sources of the European image of Americans are many and varied. The picture has been distorted by distance and by romance; filled in from the writings of friendly and unfriendly visitors and from the bitter and brilliant portraiture of our own novelists; colored by contacts with American expatriots on a small scale and American tourists and GI's of two wars on a large scale; tinted by envy and admiration and fear and chagrin. And, of course, for the past twenty-five years, the image has most luridly been flickering out of California's dream-factories.

The Big Lie that Hollywood has flashed around the world will not be so easily destroyed by matching Russian invective over the Voice

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of America. Nor will it be done by bandaging the eyes of our Lady of Liberty in the harbor so that she may not witness the innocent locked-out refugees at her feet, or by routing subversives from under every bed, and generally behaving in the eyes of our critical dependents like hysterics. Even some Southern senators may realize that barring Negroes from the ballot in Mississippi automatically lowers our cultural (and political) status in Europe. But how many radio executives understand that a similar cultural (and political) seismograph registers when a CBS Symphony Orchestra is disbanded as a unit in order to invest the money to buy up comedians for television?

We most assuredly will not destroy the stereotype by imitating it. If it is our responsibility to make the truth about ourselves available to the anxious peoples of Europe, it is our more important responsibility to guarantee that the truth we communicate is *worth communicating*.

On the other hand, is it too much to expect that European intellectuals judge our culture with something more than smug self-satisfaction compounded of fear and ignorance? More than one hundred years ago, the young Melville observed the embarkation from Liverpool of immigrants bound for the New World. In Redburn he described the scene:

> There is something in the contemplation of the mode in which America has been settled, that, in a noble breast, should forever extinguish the prejudices of national dislikes.
>
> Settled by the people of all nations, all nations may claim her for their own. You cannot spill a drop of American blood without spilling the blood of the whole world. Be he Englishman, Frenchman, German, Dane, or Scot, the European who scoffs at an American, calls his own brother *Raca*,* and stands in danger of the judgment. . . . We are not a nation, so much as a world; for unless we may claim all the world for our sire, like Melchisedec, we are without father or mother. . . . Our ancestry is lost in the universal paternity; and Caesar and Alfred, St. Paul and Luther, and Homer and Shakespeare are as much ours as Washington, who is as much the world's as our own. We are the heirs of all time, and with all nations we divide our inheritance.

Who calls us *Raca?*

* A term of reproach used at the time of Christ, meaning fool.

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Daughter

ROBERT SIMEON ADAMS

She was the daughter of an age
Of that solemnity we cannot gauge,
A strength that comes into the bone
Of men that ploughed and turned the stone,
And wrested from the savage earth
Their heritage of bread and mirth.

They made to God no low beseeching prayers,
They built the spirit of the pioneers
Whose blood was healthy, knew the Roman good,
The scope of seasons, and the magnitude
Of sorrows, made their lives replete
With natural joys, ignored defeat,
Neither cursed God nor petitioned much.
They broke the earth, and drew the touch
Of this rich soil. Here triumphs stand
Which weaker eyes may search to understand.

✪ ROBERT SIMEON ADAMS, until his death in 1951, was headmaster of the Lakeside School in Seattle, Washington. His poems had appeared in many periodicals.

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Sex Crime and Personality:
A Study in Comparative Cultural Patterns

FRANCIS L. K. HSU

NEWS REPORTS of sex crimes appear so frequently in the United States today that authorities in diverse fields—psychiatrists, jurists and police—are deeply concerned. J. Edgar Hoover, for one, has termed sex crimes "a major threat to the women and children of the nation."

How are we meeting this threat? The remedies proposed so far—stricter laws for incarceration of the offender, or more psychiatric services for early identification and confinement of "constitutional psychopathic inferiors"—will not improve the situation as a whole. Those in favor of harsher laws need only remember the failure of Prohibition. That unsuccessful experiment proved that the most thorough police methods will fail to enforce any law to which people do not wish to submit. Those who emphasize the early discovery and treatment of "insanity," so often a defense in murder trials, ignore the fact that actual criminal psychopaths are responsible for but a fraction of all sex crimes. Here is what Dr. Edward Kelleher, chief of the Municipal Court Psychiatric Institute of Chicago, stated last spring: "Our experience shows that the sex offender can be any one, or any kind of a person. Only one-half of one per cent were found to be actual criminal sexual psychopaths. The group of sex offenders as a whole varies as widely in intelligence and stability as any other segment of society."

It seems we must re-examine our entire approach to the problem of

✪ FRANCIS L. K. HSU, a professor in the department of anthropology of Northwestern University, came to the United States in 1944. Aside from articles which have appeared in various learned journals, Dr. Hsu has written: *Under the Ancestor's Shadow* and *Religion, Science and Human Crises*, to be published in December of this year. He is now completing *Understanding China*, of which this article is a small part.

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the sex criminal, and such a re-examination should begin by realizing that sex crimes are not equally prevalent in all societies. For instance, throughout years of residence and research in China, I found sex crimes to be as rare there as they are prevalent in the United States. In China, such crimes came with military disorder. They resulted from a total social upheaval that was also accompanied by large-scale looting and wanton shooting. Any brief survey of Chinese newspapers printed in peacetime will illustrate this point. You may read there numerous stories of murder, larceny, assault, kidnapping, robbery, brigandage and adultery. But rarely will you see a report of rape and sex murder.

This contrast between China and America is even more striking when we consider the life of the majority of Chinese. Chinese farm and city workers often live on the premises of their employers. These wage earners do not see their families for months or years at a time. Older Chinese immigrants living in the continental United States carry this pattern to the extreme. Many of them have not seen their families for twenty years or more.

II

Recently proposed legal and psychiatric measures to combat sex crimes are inadequate because they place these crimes in a class by themselves. Such suggestions assume these crimes are distinct from all others. They are not. They share a common denominator with hundreds we can remember in yesterday's headlines: the murder of a girl by her jealous twin sister, the torture of a woman by her sadistic man friend, the strangulation of a father by his angry son, or the shooting of a baseball star by a girl he never knew but who decided that, if she could not have him, "nobody else will." The common denominator, to put it simply, is emotion out of control.

The relative vehemence of emotional expression in American patterns of life, and its relative weakness in Chinese patterns, is striking. This is evident of the art of the two nations. Emotions are as conspicuous on American canvasses as they are scarce on Chinese rice papers. When American artists treat humans, they tend to portray humor, reverie, distress, agony, lovesickness, or wretchedness of the soul. Chinese artists, on those rare occasions when they portray the

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human form, either leave it as a tiny dot in a vast landscape or treat it so that the body is hidden behind heavy clothing and there is no clearly defined facial expression. In American art, emotions are important even in a still-life drawing; in Chinese art, inner feelings are inconspicuous even when human beings are the subject matter. The emotions become still more explosive in modern American painting.

The contrast is equally evident in literature. As a rule, Chinese novels deal with what the characters *do*. American novels are more concerned with what the characters *think* and *feel*. There are, it is true, a few exceptions. But the comparison of any famous Chinese novel, like *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* or *All Men are Brothers* (both have been translated into English, the second work in full by Pearl S. Buck), with almost any widely hailed American novel, will reveal the absence of introspection in the former and its relative abundance in the latter. No traditional Chinese novelist tells the whole story through the eyes of one character. (The limited point of view, however, is a regular technique of the American novelist). The American love story usually treats the union of the hero and his girl as the climax of the book. The Chinese novel's treatment of sexual love is not only casual and frank, but union between the lovers ordinarily occurs fairly early in the narrative. The balance of the story tells how the hero marries the heroine *properly* and with what rectifying wedding ceremony.

The contrast in novels is a telling reflection of the actual patterns of life. In the West, a man and woman "fall" in love without (in theory, at least) rhyme or reason. One is at once "mad" about the other, and both parties are pleasantly doomed. When two lovers appear in public with their arms around each other, the rest of the world can go by. On the other hand, modern Chinese youths, though attracted to many American ideas and practices, conduct their love affairs quite differently. The majority want freedom of choice in marriage. But their greatest concern remains the opinion and feeling of their parents.

The letters to Chinese "Dorothy Dixes" are interesting in this respect. Not only are Chinese young people sensitive to parental interference, but also to that from brothers or sisters. Even an incomplete education may cause serious concern, but rarely have I seen a

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letter raising questions of compatibility between the two young persons. This is in line with the public attitude of Chinese lovers toward each other. They regard all public intimacy between the sexes as indecent. An American in love asks the question: "How does my heart feel?" A Chinese asks: "What will other people say?" American men and women marry because they are "crazy" about each other. But an age-old Chinese adage says of a woman's marriage:

She'll go, she'll go;
For meals, for clothes.

The differences go further. People who clutter up the matter of choosing a mate with so many practical considerations are not likely to be as ardent lovers as those who depend primarily upon their own feelings. Love and hatred come from the same psychological forces and the intensity that applies to one applies also to the other. The Chinese, when he does hate, tends to fall short of the American's intensity, determination and finality. Not only are sex crimes rare in China, but all crimes motivated by runaway emotions are equally unusual.

The murder of a man by his wife occurred occasionally in the olden days because this was a married woman's single road to freedom. But murder because of hatred, despite the many difficult problems of adjustment within a Chinese household, was almost unheard of. Murder, in Chinese saying, is "taking life because of the desire for wealth." And practical motives were most certainly behind the numerous tortures in Chinese prisons not so long ago, or the bloody intrigues among the aristocrats during the dynastic days.

This remains true in modern cities where the crime of passion is still the exception. When an angry son hurled a knife and killed his father in 1946, shocked newspaper editors vehemently denounced him. In another case, the emotions involved were not even powerful enough to sustain the attacker through his acts. In 1945, a jilted college student slashed his girl's wrists and shoulder several times with a knife and then jumped into a shallow lake. Both recovered, and the youth who had attempted the murder-suicide faced a barrage of editorial castigation. One professor characterized the affair as a "dirty and ugly business." We should remember that both cases were sensational simply because of their rarity.

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So whether we look at art, literature, romance or actual family relations, the same contrasts obtain:

1. In American life, strong emotions and their individual expression stand out; in Chinese life, lack of strong emotions and a sensitivity to social opinion are important.
2. The centering of American attention on individual emotions tends to intensify them; Chinese concern for the reactions of others tends to moderate the emotions.

This is why Chinese feel that Americans are unpredictable, while Americans say Chinese are "inscrutable," masters of self-control. Americans are not so predictable as Chinese because they follow their individual predilections more than Chinese do. More vehement emotionally, they may explode where the Chinese will not. Chinese are noted for their impassivity because they heed the dictates of external circumstances more than Americans do. Less overtly emotional, they feel at ease where Americans do not.

III

What is the origin of these contrasting American and Chinese personality characteristics? The most obvious factors are seen in those phases of family life in which America and China consistently differ.

To begin with, while the average size of the Chinese family is smaller than popularly imagined, it usually consists of more than one married couple and more than two generations living under one roof. Very early in life, therefore, the Chinese comes into *constant* contact with a larger number of relatives than the American does.

Far more important are the respective patterns of family behavior. First, the basic tendency of the American family is toward rugged individualism. Each new generation replaces the old, and old age is synonymous with being relegated to the background. The Chinese family, on the other hand, emphasizes loyalty to the lineage. Old age leads to a more respected status. Secondly, American parents are the sole agents of control over their minor children. Even when grandparents exercise authority during an emergency, they merely follow the rules laid down by the parents.

Partly because of their fear of being replaced, American parents

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are likely to be jealous of any infringement on their right to sole control. Chinese parents, lacking such fear, are less touchy about interference with their authority. The liberty taken by most Chinese relatives would break up the majority of American homes. Furthermore, while most American children do not assume adult roles until they are legally of age, Chinese children are delegated mature responsibilities as soon as they are physically and mentally ready.

The results of these broad differences in family patterns are far-reaching, and once begun, they are bolstered by many forces in the respective societies. The more exclusive and omnipresent parental control in America makes the parental image stand out above all else in the mind of the young. A child's attitude, whether of dependence or rebellion, becomes focused upon the parents, since they are the sole sources of reward or punishment. The American family pattern thus nourishes a personality marked by strong emotions and preoccupation with the self.

The diluted and less final parental control in China evokes early in life an appreciation of the differences between changing external circumstances. Since parents are not the sole determinants in punishment or reward, they do not become the chief oppressors or only gods. Therefore, there is a less turbulent opposition or paralyzing attachment between parents and children. The parental image in the mind of the individual has its proper place with those of other relatives. The Chinese family pattern is thus the source of a personality characterized by more moderate emotions and a desire for harmony with the external world.*

IV

However, the American personality has certain qualities the Chinese personality does not possess. Chinese, with their compara-

* The contrast made here has nothing to do with the popularly known concepts of *introversion* and *extroversion*. Both Chinese and Americans may be introverts, persons who deal with reality by thought. Or they may be extroverts, persons who deal with reality by action. But the Chinese tends to mobilize his thought or action for the purpose of *conforming* to the reality, while the American tends to do the same for the purpose of *making* the reality conform to him. The business man who talks about creating a demand for goods he wants to sell is an example of American extrovert personality. An old time Chinese business man, on the other hand, would be interested merely in filling existing needs.

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tively placid reaction to the world, are usually difficult to stir up. Americans, stronger emotionally, are more easily touched by men and events. The Chinese personality is essentially conservative; it tends to be cautious and works toward compromise. The American personality is potentially more progressive; it tends to drive toward given ends without remorse. The Chinese personality blunders less, but the American personality accomplishes more.

Thus, while there is a small minority of Americans who commit violent crimes of passion, the great body of Americans are given to spontaneous acts of kindness, kindness on a scale and with a promptitude scarcely equalled elsewhere in the world. A girl trapped underground kept the whole nation in suspense. Another girl disfigured while rescuing her brothers and sisters was showered with countless gifts from every part of the country. Similarly, while many Americans have been easy prey for organizations like the Ku Klux Klan, the Bund, and the Christian Front, many more Americans have vigorously supported the March of Dimes, domestic charities, CARE and other international relief agencies.

Largely as a result of difference in personality orientation, the histories of social organizations in the two countries are very dissimilar, despite the fact that Chinese and Americans have qualities in common. Both are, for example, suspicious of public officials and regimentation. The old Chinese dynasties ruled not by active control over the people but by the people's passive acquiescence.

But there are vital differences in the social organizations of China and America that reflect the peoples' different personality orientation. Though tensions are not unusual in American corporations, associations and unions, these groups have a longer life and a greater vitality that leads to expansion. Most Chinese organizations make an auspicious start and then peter out. The only lasting organizations in old China were those based in concrete relationships such as a village, district or trade. Enthusiasm for an abstract ideology or the remote possibility of greater things to come was rare. Americans support a particular government or political party with determination and solidarity, even though quarrels are common; but at the height of the Nationalists' popularity in China, the party suffered from serious defections within its own ranks.

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There is no mystery in all this. Emotional intensity enables Americans to combine with each other when they are aroused. The lack of this quality causes the Chinese to be less perseverant because their emotions ebb easily. Furthermore, with their self-preoccupation, Americans are likely to be more concerned with their individual responsibilities. Chinese, being sensitive to external circumstances, tend so to exaggerate any slackening of effort in the next person that a general stampede and a collapse of the entire organization often result.

That is why in America a change of political allegiance by any prominent person is a matter of public censure, while the few bureaucrats in Chinese history who have refused to serve under a new dynasty have been hailed as the greatest of the great. This is also why, during the present period of change, there has been little voluntary exodus from China comparable to that from Russia after 1917, and it is unlikely that the emerging administration will be drastically non-Chinese.

This does not mean that voluntary martyrdom is absent from Chinese culture. Many famous Chinese have given their lives for causes which were of no profit to themselves or their children. For example, in 1519, numerous high officials chose execution or exile rather than support the emperor's wish to leave his capital on a pleasure trip. Such a display of courage is not an isolated example. But the objectives which Chinese martyrs opposed were those that violated certain traditions, ways of behavior that must be observed in the manner of the forbears who set them. Americans, however, characteristically have fought to defend the Constitution not for tradition's sake but in the name of liberty and freedom for themselves and the generations to come. In other words, Chinese have most often interpreted the present in terms of the *concrete* past. Americans have strong feelings about the present in terms of the *imagined* future.

Bigotry is the extreme negative expression of the American personality type; opportunism is the Chinese complement. As extremes are rare, the vast majority of each society merely incline toward one or the other pole of their respective strengths or weaknesses. But the consequences of these inclinations cannot be overestimated.

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If this analysis is at all correct, the higher incidence of crimes motivated by runaway emotions in America must be linked to the same sources of energy which have made America great. Such crimes are, therefore, one of the prices for American civilization.

V

The question we now face is: Can the sources of such crimes be reduced without at the same time doing serious damage to the mainspring of American civilization? Many contributing factors come to mind. We need, for example, to re-examine the role of Puritanism in American culture. A more realistic approach to certain sex problems is in order. We need, also, to question the wisdom of an exaggerated pattern of romantic love in marriage. The emotional upheaval of disappointment should be reduced. Most important of all, however, is the need to revaluate the meaning of self-reliance as it is encouraged in American homes, schools, and the society as a whole. Self-reliance has two facets. On the one hand, it consists of a strong emphasis on individual differences. On the other, it involves an exaggerated feeling for the self.

There is no doubt that, except for identical twins, no two individuals are biologically alike. Nor is there any doubt that, in a democratic society, the maximum realization of all individual potentialities is of great consequence. It is no accident that in America intelligence tests, which purport to reveal individual differences, and psychoanalysis, which deepens and intensifies the feeling for self, have both achieved great popularity. The prevalence of the "scientific" view, carried to an extreme in progressive schools, that infants and children "know best" for themselves, must be understood in the same light.

However, like all good things, self-reliance can be overstressed. When educators reiterate the necessity of encouraging in youngsters a natural sex attitude, they often forget that, to be completely natural, man must return to the caves. When parents, hoping to fit their offspring for life in a democratic society, encourage them to be independent and aggressive, they should recall that excessive independence leads to anarchy. When people point to huge American enterprises as examples of what unflinching individual efforts

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can accomplish, they will do well to note also that crimes of passion spring from the same uncontrolled individual predilections.

Furthermore, no society will survive if self-reliance is exaggerated to the point where it overshadows common interests and co-operation. In times of war, the men who play the most important roles must be alike not only in their attitude and action, but also in their dress and much of their private life. Even in the absence of an emergency, the basic fact about modern life is man's increasing dependence upon society and culture to aid him in his struggle against natural and social obstacles, for the preservation of his freedom and the realization of his potentialities. The more complex the society and the culture, the greater the dependence of the individual upon his group.

It is true that minimizing self-reliance will have a moderating effect on American life in general. But American society, having reached its present height, today needs more social consolidation, so that people can take time out to appreciate what they have and to appreciate each other—not more industrial and commercial conquests in the course of which people hurriedly live and hastily die. This need is not satisfied by the relatively temporary sense of solidarity accompanying an emergent crisis, which Americans have always been able to achieve. Much more nearly permanent, it will require a considerable modification of the prevalent fundamentally personal outlook. The present international difficulties make this outlook more imperative, not less.

A society with an overdeveloped pattern of group conformity runs the danger of stagnation, but a society with an overdeveloped pattern of individualism tends ultimately to destroy itself by internal explosions. In the latter type of society, unless the pattern of life is modified in time, crimes motivated by runaway emotions will increase as frontiers diminish. The place of an ideal society is somewhere between the extremes.

In the light of the foregoing, we shall be unrealistic if we expect the psychiatrist or the policeman to be a sufficiently effective check on sex crimes. Psychiatrists may straighten out some aberrant individuals; the police will protect some victims: neither can stem the tide flowing from a pattern of life.

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Tavistock Square

For V. W.

LOUISE TOWNSEND NICHOLL

Yours is the voice that I have almost known
From style and rhythm, yet beyond my reach
As wave which breaks upon too far a beach.
But now I hear the inevitable tone,
The only timbre which could be your own,
And cadence lifts into the living speech.

For I am come into your winter room
In freesia afternoon, Virginia Woolf.
The warp of talk has long been laid, the woof
Is making now upon the accustomed loom
And all the woven flowers are in bloom,
Nostalgia's final miracle of proof

That on a London February day,
Instructed by the railings of your Square
I entered at the door and climbed the stair
And found you here. So it were vain to say
That house and you are vanished, and away,
The merriment an imprint on the air.

✪ Associate editor of E. P. Dutton & Company, LOUISE TOWNSEND NICHOLL has published three volumes of poems: *Water and Light*, *Dawn in Snow*, and *Life Is the Flesh;* and one book of prose: *The Blossom-Print.*

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Footnote to Spengler

DAVID MORTON

. . . So be instructed, now, what zero is.
The moving point was cyclic, and arrives
At journey's end—and journey's end is this.

The ravening snake discovers his own tail,
Without discovering that the tail is his,
And only thinks such plenty cannot fail.

The unknown quantity was always this,
The zero that the snake could not discern.
From where he fed, a limited view was his.

Only the stars could see the plain design,
And ask themselves what other name there is
For something less than zero . . . how define

The lessening thing the mouth will make of this,
When zero cancels, where the last bite is.

✪ DAVID MORTON, formerly professor of English at Amherst College, is the author of some twenty volumes of prose and poetry, the latest of which is *Poems 1920-1945*. Two of Mr. Morton's poems appeared in the Summer, 1950, issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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The Roughest Profession: The College Presidency

WILLIAM S. CARLSON

A FIVE-STAR GENERAL at Columbia, a White House hopeful at Penn, an Army secretary at North Carolina, governors at Virginia and Bucknell: sales resistance to college presidents of the prewar variety is stiffening. To many academicians, it's not cricket, and Governor Dewey's casual disclosure of bids from two universities has done little to soothe their concern. Some of them, to be sure, react with a lofty attitude, such as that of the Stanford professor who conceded that "year by year the *inducing* of any outstanding professor to undertake a college presidency becomes more difficult." A venerable educator, Monroe Deutsch of the University of California, thinks the infiltration "endangers the future of American higher education," with the "university ideal sold on the auction block of success" and "all the sinister pressures of the outside world" corrupting academic standards. Union College's President Carter Davidson admits that some outsiders have been very successful, but he argues that most colleges still need the understanding touch of the professional educator. He even suggests, half seriously, a program to train career men working consciously toward presidencies.

By short-circuiting educational leadership in favor of the magic managerial touch, colleges are coming close to forgetting their real business, the training of young minds. Unfortunately, the competition that the scholars offer to the invaders is often little more than nominal. Fewer and fewer are the examples like Yale's, where a professor of history was chosen as the new president, instead of the broker and cabinet officer rumored to be in line for the position.

WILLIAM S. CARLSON is president of the University and the State Agricultural College of Vermont. Dr. Carlson was formerly a dean at the University of Minnesota and served during World War II as a colonel in the Air Force.

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The average tenure of each college president's administration is less than five years. Since there are about 1,000 degree-granting colleges in the United States today, this means about 200 presidential vacancies to be filled on our campuses this year—and every year. For every really worthwhile presidency, there are likely to be 100 or more candidates. Here is the most competitive employment field in the country, and in it one can find many a job-hunting lesson: the trials and errors of the American educator's constant quest for his personal grail, a presidency. Better yet, there's many a tip on how *not* to win the position one covets. As R. M. Hughes, former president of Iowa State College, points out, the appointment of a new president is the most important event of any decade, even in the strongest and most stable institution.

Academicians who mourn the passing of so many college presidencies into the hands of military men and politicians need to seek the reason no further than their own grounds, for that is where the contest is being played and lost. When confronted with the opportunity to seize the presidencies themselves, our scholars too often display ineptitude which throws the burden on their boards of trustees to go out and find someone, even though off the campus, who seems to know what the score is.

Last winter, a moderately small college was in the throes of selecting a new president. I had the opportunity of reading the candidates' dossiers—nearly a hundred of them—for a job that pays about as well as a Congressman's. But while a Congressman usually has to knock off only one or two opponents to get his job, the man who came up with the presidency at "Seaboard State" had to survive the winnowing from a whole basket of chaff. Yet whatever qualifications many of the candidates did have were buried, almost inevitably, in a mass of poorly conceived, naïvely presented, and pathetically documented trivia that would have hidden the educational light of a Nicholas Murray Butler.

Among the dozens of aspirants, the folder containing the brief, straightforward, simple, accurate statements of and about the ultimately successful candidate, a Dr. C, stood out impressively. There's a tradition in academic circles that when a college presidency is at stake, the job should seek the man, and not vice versa. This formula

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obviously isn't always followed. There are go-getters—or self-seekers, if you will—who can't abide the wait-and-see rules of such a game as that. And the nonprofessionals, who aren't bound by a code of ethics like that with which the academician has fettered himself, are even more ubiquitous. It's not unusual for the trustees of a college with a presidential vacancy to receive a bristling missive from an over-age admiral looking for an odd job to while away his time, or a past-tense governor who sees decided advantages in a college president's ability to keep his office just about as long as he wants.

There is a tacit understanding, nonetheless, that a college's trustees will hunt out a suitable man through discreet inquiry, a staid suggestion here and there, and finally an invitation to be considered. The new president, Dr. C, warranted serious consideration because his name was put forward by another university's president whose suggestions had been sought by Seaboard's trustees. But not more than half the 100 names ultimately entered in Seaboard State's sweepstakes were introduced in this impeccable manner. The other fifty were considered—after a fashion—because they had invited themselves.

The most unfortunate part of these interlopers' applications was the fundamental dishonesty of their methods. Virtually none admitted forthrightly that "I am applying for the presidency of Seaboard State." Among a score of excuses and evasions, the most common was having a friend make the first overtures to the college. "Dear Sir," the friend would write to the trustees' chairman, "it has been brought to my attention that your college has a vacancy in its presidency, and I thought you would like to learn of the qualifications of Dr. Joe Doakes." Then would follow a eulogy that should bring blushes to a brass monkey, enumerating the candidate's professional and personal virtues.

Some of these "friends" used even cruder tactics. One of them, writing to the Seaboard trustees, saluted the chairman as "Dear Charlie" and closed with "warm personal regards." "Dear Charlie" subsequently circulated the application among the board members with a gruff note explaining that he had never heard of the man who presumed his friendship.

"When I heard recently that Seaboard was looking for a presi-

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dent, I could not help thinking that Dean R would be a wonderful find for any college," another enthusiast burbles to a Seaboard trustee—without being asked. His reaction was not quite so spontaneous as he would have had it appear. The same trustee, who probably is on a select list for gold-mine promoters, received five other letters in support of that candidate.

"But," one might ask, "isn't a little bit of pushiness a necessary qualification in one seeking to be a president, since the getting of money will be one of his prime duties?" A philosopher has declared that "honesty, above all else, should be at the heart of this business." Distill, as I have, the qualities of a good president from the ideas of many experts—men who hold or have held the position, or those critics, the professors—and you'll not find a single suggestion that pushiness or boldness or ruthlessness would be desirable.

Most sought after, perhaps, is courage, which Robert Hutchins calls the habit of taking responsibility. And Dixon Wecter thought that without "unfaltering courage, the office becomes a farce." Others look for integrity, tact and patience, to say nothing of physical endurance, intellectual flexibility, and what A. J. Brumbaugh, a president himself, describes as a combination of good judgment and good digestion. Obviously, the president will ideally have such qualities as a sense of humor, a platform presence, and an ability to say "no" pleasantly but firmly. You could find a score of other attributes sought for in a president, but opportunism is not one of them. Nor, of course, did the men who see and play the angles make appreciable headway with Seaboard's trustees.

Overreaching was an error of many boosters. On the strength of one entirely legitimate recommendation, a certain professor merited serious consideration. But just a week earlier his brother had written an unsolicited appeal, describing the professor's qualifications in terms that only a proud family can muster about a favorite son. The brother's phrases were so excessively glowing that the shadow of questionable taste fell over the professor, who therefore never had a chance, despite the strength of his other unbiased recommendation.

Old acquaintances were dredged up repeatedly. Nearly half the candidates decided to be not only roundabout, but clever, in their approach. Armed with a Seaboard alumni directory, they could rather

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easily turn up someone among their own circle who, somewhere, sometime, had a connection with someone close to the horse's mouth at college. The contriving necessary to produce these nominal connections was perfectly evident when all the correspondence was dropped into the candidate's file. The would-be deftness of these behind-the-scenes maneuvers always hurt.

In one case, for example, an associate of Dean X at a midwestern university wrote a four-page longhand letter urging selection of the dean. This piece of fan mail was directed to "Dear Mary and Dick," his sister-in-law and her husband, and pointed out that they surely knew some of Seaboard's trustees, a list of whom he enclosed. Dick, a lawyer in Seaboard's home state, did happen to be a professional acquaintance of some trustees, but he merely passed along the brother-in-law's letter with his own note: "Enclosed is a self-explanatory letter from Mary's brother-in-law, for whose opinion we have some regard. Beyond that, you understand, I have no interest in Dean X." No one at Seaboard had too much interest in Dean X either, when the letters reached his file.

That, nevertheless, was far from the most remote connection which the candidates tried to employ. There came a letter to one of Seaboard's trustees from a man he'd not heard from for nearly twenty years. The correspondent, recalling the latter stages of the Hoover administration, when both he and the trustee had been rather highly placed in Washington, plunged from that single introductory paragraph into his real purpose:

"I am taking the liberty," he conceded, "of writing in behalf of a very good friend of mine who is interested in Seaboard State." The letter then dissolved into praise for the "very good friend" and condemnation for the New Deal, the Fair Deal and their adherents. "He never was taken in by their false, socialistic ideas," the rock-ribbed correspondent declaimed. In his unbounded enthusiasm for the man who would save Seaboard from the Welfare State, he overlooked the fact (which the law of averages could have told him) that several of Seaboard's trustees are Democrats, not to say Fair Dealers. This safe-and-sane candidate's folder remained thin.

Seaboard's presidential hunt was not, fortunately, conducted with any political bias, from either side. The only real hint that politics

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entered the picture was in a mild comment by an influential trustee: "I don't care what party the man belongs to, but we do want to know that he subscribes to the basic economic, social and political thinking of our country." The politics of President-elect C never appeared in his voluminous file.

But there were cases in which candidates or their friends seemed to think Seaboard would demand a president who could stand behind any Republican platform written between 1880 and 1940. Without even having been asked for his political views, one applicant volunteered that "Hard work, individual enterprise, a minimum amount of governmental supervision and control are what made America great and will make it still greater." Actually, this man was on a Federal bureau's payroll when he wrote that statement.

Candidates' friends usually hastened to declare their "disinterested interest" in the man or the college. Their disinterestedness usually faded rapidly with an application of a good spot-remover, well rubbed in a circular motion. One alumnus wrote three pages of superlatives on behalf of a man who never entered his own name. The wound-up alumnus then added a fourth page admitting disingenuously that he hoped for a job at Seaboard if his man were hired. The same motive turned up in the letter of a "friend" whose recommendation of a Dr. J made it clear, between the lines, that he would be in line for J's present job if J moved on to Seaboard. In another case, it soon became clear that the behind-the-scenes promotion was inspired by a one-time department head at Seaboard who had been fired. Presumably he reasoned that if he could put his man into Seaboard's presidency, he would have his old job back.

The prize boner of the sad collection was pulled by three so-called friends of one candidate, Dr. A. Perhaps the error was the candidate's own, though he was never heard from directly. The friends, whom we may as well call Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, lived in widely separated cities; they did not refer to each other; and the backgrounds of their acquaintance with Dr. A were varied. Shadrach wrote from the South to tell a trustee that his friend Dr. A was an excellent administrator, and that Seaboard couldn't possibly make a happier choice. Shadrach enumerated Dr. A's educational record, his academic positions, his various professional activities, his dozen mili-

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tary and governmental positions, his published articles and books, his professional societies and clubs, his decorations, and even referred to the seventy-five book reviews A had written. ("A list may be had upon request.") From the Pacific Coast, Meshach addressed a letter to the board's chairman, mentioning that his good friend, Dr. A, would be a particularly good president for Seaboard because of his education, academic positions, professional activities, military and governmental positions, published articles and books, professional societies and clubs, decorations, and the book reviews which he had written. ("A list may be had upon request.") Meshach's documenting of Dr. A's prowess and accomplishments not only filled the same two pages as Shadrach's; they were worded identically, even down to a misspelling. More surprisingly, the statistical run-down was followed in each letter by four or five paragraphs of the writer's "personal" opinion of Dr. A. Shadrach and Meshach, despite the thousands of miles separating them, chose precisely the same language to sum up their regard for their pal. When Abednego's letter came in (he happened to be writing from A's own campus, but maintained that A knew nothing of his interest), the trustees, more humorously than indignantly, noted that this miracle of telepathy was still at work. Abednego's letter, too, was identical, save for an introductory paragraph to fit his relationship with his Seaboard "contact."

As for the trustees, the payoff—judging from their comments—was the paragraph in each letter which maintained: "The enumerated facts indicate in a cold-blooded way that Dr. A's progress has been steadily upward and that in whatever group he is placed he always rises to the top." One trustee commented that on the basis of A's selection of friends, it was small wonder he floated to the surface. In any event, A's stock sank to a new low around Seaboard.

I wish to cast whatever doubt I can upon the value of the highly regarded insider who will presumably bring effective pressure upon such motley individualists as compose a college board of trustees. Just about one thing can be certain: such efforts to use someone else's position create resentment and ill will toward the applicant. I've mentioned, disparagingly enough, the attempts to employ rather distant connections. What's much worse, according to Seaboard's reaction, is trying to get a bigwig to use a club—whether it be only

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prestige or actual pressure—on a group of intelligent and independent men.

Seaboard had two such cases. In neither case was the outcome favorable to the candidate, for two main reasons: the trustees recognized and resented the crassness of the approach, and the tycoons themselves were impersonal in passing along the supplications of the candidates.

Not all the blame for misfiring applications can be shoved onto the shoulders of well-meaning friends. When candidates go to bat for themselves, the result is frequently worse. One man, engaged in education long enough to know better, showed up on Seaboard's campus in person, and without invitation. For two days he advertised his candidacy to all who would listen—and by the second day the list was rapidly dwindling. Three or four others sent statements of their experience and qualifications, reaching the nadir of diplomacy by sending them in mimeographed form, thereby disclosing that they were sowing applications in all directions, without takers.

Just three days after Seaboard's presidency was vacated, and long before the Board of Trustees could consider a successor, the president of another college, several hundred miles distant, backed into the starting gate with this masterpiece: "The Chairman of the Trustees, Seaboard State, Dear Sir: Two of my close personal friends have informed me that you are seeking candidates for the presidency of Seaboard. While I am happy in my present position and believe my work here has been entirely successful, etc."

The note of blissful service at present jobs resounded throughout the letters. Wherever their duty takes them, educators are always happy, one would gather, but on the other hand the challenge of a bigger task fascinates, almost hypnotizes, them. No man of good sense could compose some of the drivel that college presidents, deans and professors wrote to Seaboard's trustees. This one, for example, came from a dean captivated by his position but ambitious to be lured elsewhere: "In our present happy position, we are administering a school of liberal arts. . . . We are very happy in all our relationships here. . . ."

Four readings of that particular letter were required to prove that the dean was speaking of himself alone, and that he had simply

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adopted the coy royal plural. Somewhere, in one of the classrooms where he had spent his life, he probably heard that it's a good idea to avoid the first person singular.

In a depressing percentage of other cases good judgment was lacking. One man, outstanding in his own field, apparently couldn't trust his secretary with the super-secret that he wanted a new job. So he typed his own letter of application, though it was all too plain that he had only passing familiarity with a typewriter. Two pages were tightly packed with doubtful grammar, weird punctuation, typographical errors and strikeovers, and an Original System of Capitalization, which made much of his Letter look like This. The man might have been the find of this century for any college, but you couldn't make Seaboard's trustees think so after a glance at that letter.

A young man in a rather good educational spot wrote a brief note asking if he might send along an application on his own behalf. No sooner had he received off-hand permission to submit his statement than he sent his application, beginning with something like this: "If I were a Methodist, I might sing 'Almost Persuaded.'" He was dropped immediately. If he interpreted casual courtesy as an invitation to take the post, further interest quite likely would have had him announcing that he had accepted.

A former Seaboard dean wrote, suggestively, that he would "be glad to help in any possible way to find a suitable president." He wasn't taken up on the generous offer. But his euphemisms didn't pass over the trustees' heads: his letter was filed with all the other applicants'. Another educator, whose achievements in his profession could have spoken creditably for him, was asked to write somewhat fully of his background and educational ideas. He chose to open his letter with an account of a somewhat trying early life, including his experience as a construction gang foreman and as a real estate speculator. The interest cooled, not because of the trustees' wariness of foremen or real estate men, but because of his demonstrably poor judgment in taking their time with a harangue on his preprofessional life. The same fate met the application of a man who detailed his career as a salesman, but in his case the reaction was, quite logically, that he lacked enough real background in higher education.

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Virtually all the candidates already were employed, but three seemed to be "at liberty," if veiled phrasing in some letters was interpreted correctly. The last positions they mentioned were qualified by "former," and there the veil was drawn. In a couple of instances, a man's departure from a job was passed off airily as "a disagreement with the president over policies" (in the case of a professor) or as a "disagreement with the trustees over policies" (in the case of a president). These references were meant to reassure Seaboard's trustees; they did not.

The personality of a college president's wife, of course, is an inseparable part of the man's own personal suitableness. Awareness of this inevitability was acute among the applicants and their boosters. In several cases, they made it seem that the wife was the real candidate for Seaboard's presidency, and that her ability to entertain was the criterion of her husband's usefulness. In an unsolicited letter of application, a Southern educator wrote of his own wife that she is "loved and respected by young people" and is possessed of "all the social graces." So far as Seaboard is concerned, this lady is still gathering love and respect at the same college where she had been oozing graciousness for the past quarter-century.

Repeated references to a wife's looks, intelligence, personality and manners bobbed up in perhaps two-thirds of the candidates' files. "Mrs. —— is a really lovely person" was a favorite way of putting it. A friend of Professor D, writing to a trustee, said that his slight acquaintance with the professor's wife convinced him that she was well equipped to fill the demanding role of first lady of Seaboard's campus. Within a fortnight, the same friend wrote again. He had been entertained at the Ds' home, and by this time he was prepared to testify that Mrs. D was "gracious, charming, intelligent, and entertains beautifully." He even added that the Ds' only child was evidently "a normal boy" (his exact words), who demonstrated "exemplary social conduct."

In a sense, the candidates' emphasis on their wives' talents was not misdirected, for there was an undeniable fascination on the part of some of the trustees with this little tidbit. One wrote to a friend who knew a promising applicant: "Can you give me any information with respect to her (the wife's) affiliations and any information available

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with respect to their daughter? Any information beyond that normally given in an application would be helpful."

In many ways, this last thought illustrates the trustees' inquiry into almost every aspect of a man's life which could affect his suitableness for Seaboard's presidency. Everyone who reached the finals in Seaboard's elimination tournament had passed a fine-screen testing. The trustees wanted a moderately young man, and they declined to deal further with one candidate of fifty-eight, though they had assurance that "one certainly would not suspect his age on meeting him; he has the appearance of one ten years younger."

After the hopeless cases had filtered to the bottom of the heap, Seaboard was lucky to be able to make its selection from even a handful. It was fortunate that the trustees were suffering from a minimum of what Dixon Wecter called "the vagueness and indecision about the whole duty of a president, resulting from a lack of philosophy of education." Recognizing that the man they were looking for would fill a job which is one of the most difficult in our society, the trustees set out to find a man big enough for the job. They wanted an educator, not a promoter, and because of that resolve, their task was simplified.

"The man we want," the trustees' chairman once told me, describing a hope rather than a person, "will be capable of presiding, actually as well as in theory, over a university. We want a man who will be attracted to Seaboard's presidency in the hope of serving young people who are hungering for an education, rather than a man lured by the salary, and prestige, and power. Our next president will have to see where Seaboard's educational program ought to go, visualize the means to accomplish his resulting policies, and provide the leadership to gain his goals, which also would be ours."

It wasn't hard for a disinterested observer quickly to spot Dr. C as the eventual winner. He wasn't a "name"; he had none of the luster of a returned war hero, nor the glamor of a politician. On the other hand, his record was flawless academically. He was in his early forties, but he had held a deanship and other responsible positions at two reputable universities, and all the little details dovetailed, even down to his family life. Furthermore, one of the distinguishing points of his candidacy was the proud reserve and precision with which it was

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conducted from original submission to the trustees' final approving nod. This alone was enough to set him apart from some others who might have been approximately as well qualified.

Now that the new president is about to take office, Seaboard's trustees think they could advise an applicant on almost anything he might wish to know about how to impress, for better or for worse, a prospective employer. They've seen and heard everything, including an unsought application from a man never heard from before or since. Submitting no qualifications, he launched without introduction into the four-point program he would give Seaboard as its president: Football profits divided fifty-fifty between the college and players; the college's share split between the faculty and a general improvement program; Seaboard made the most respected college in the world; teaching made the most honored of all professions.

"Just between you and me," Seaboard's chairman informed me, "there'd be a much greater chance of gaining that last point if the profession lost some of the characters we've found flourishing in it."

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Pétain's Political Ambition

ANDRÉ AMBRON

THERE ARE FEW FIGURES in history about whom there has been a more complete reversal of opinion than Henri-Philippe Pétain. Broken by old age and disappointments, discredited before the world, and despised by most of his countrymen—the doddering prisoner of the bleak island fortress of Yeu little resembled the resplendent soldier of pre-Vichy days who had towered above the turmoil and insecurity of the interwar years, a symbol of permanency and solidity and the hero of the nation.

As one considers this tragic downfall following the inglorious Vichy episode, one cannot help but wonder how it was that the Marshal allowed himself to be dragged into this ill-omened political venture. To be sure, Vichy could hardly have been avoided after France's defeat. The continuation of normal parliamentary government during the trying days to come was unthinkable, and the presence of the victorious Nazi troops on French territory constituted a strong argument for a reaction away from democracy. Moreover, many Frenchmen had grown dissatisfied with their form of government during the decade preceding the war; and the defeat, which was often blamed openly on the Third Republic, intensified this sentiment and created an attitude amenable to a more authoritarian form of government. Pétain's share in the political upheaval was not inevitable, however, and only his own personal eagerness to be involved could have drawn him away from a retirement in which, still venerated by his countrymen, admired by his former allies, and respected by the enemy, he might have played a much nobler role.

✪ ANDRÉ AMBRON is currently attending the Sorbonne and working toward a Doctorat d'Université in the combined field of Western European History and Political Science. His particular interest and research in the political collapse of the Third Republic prompted the writing of this article.

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Pétain's political ambition in the declining years of his life offers a perplexing problem—one which is properly explained neither by the claims of selfless devotion offered by himself and his disciples, nor by his enemies' accusations of scheming villainy. The explanation comes rather from the strangely twisted mentality hidden behind the famed marmoreal features of the Marshal—from his intense self-righteousness, spurred by a constant feeling that he never received sufficient recognition, and leading to an almost maniacal craving for self-justification. While it is not permissible for the student of history to explain an event in terms of a single cause, it is often possible to isolate one factor as predominant. Pétain's frustrated self-righteousness is the *leit-motif* which runs through his life and helps clarify his later political behavior.

The development of this sentiment can be traced in Pétain's career before Vichy. In view of the complete obsolescence of his military ideas before the Nazi *Blitzkrieg* in 1940, it may be hard to realize that Pétain was once considered a radical in military circles. Following the humiliating defeat of 1871, the military in France, looking toward the future, developed a strategy based on the principle of offensive. This strategy was generally taught by the leading military minds of the day, and in particular by Foch, who was in charge of the *École de Guerre*. Pétain, who taught a course in infantry tactics at that same school, on the other hand, favored defensive strategy, involving a wearing-out action followed by counter-offensive against a weakened and disorganized enemy. His motto was "Fire kills," and he emphasized precision over chance firing; he pointed out that a soldier lying in his trench could cause much more damage than one running in the fields, and endorsed the machine-gun, then a new weapon.

It took the early setbacks of the First World War, when offensive was put into practice with too much enthusiasm, to give some justification to the tactics of Pétain, whose troops had fared better than most, and to bring him into notice. He won some advancement, then was given his big chance when he was sent to redress the critical situation around Verdun, where the Germans were making tremendous efforts to wipe out this stubborn bulge in their flank. Pétain had the opportunity of putting his defensive

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strategy to a full-scale test, and the success of his efforts have become a part of history. However, as is usually the case, the legend differs somewhat from the reality. Pétain's defensive strategy had been successful, but, as General Joffre was to explain in his *Memoirs*, he attached such exaggerated importance to the sole *defense* of Verdun (to the exclusion of other capital action along the front), that Joffre, who was eager to get back on the offensive, resolved to remove him from the Verdun battlefield by giving him a higher command. In other words, Pétain was "kicked upstairs."

He was not in the least unaware of the nature of his elevation, and he remarked to War Minister Painlevé, who was visiting him at the time: "You are looking at a general who has just been relieved of his command." But the greatest blow came when his second and later successor at Verdun, General Nivelle, an "offensive" man, was picked over his head to replace Joffre as Commander-in-Chief of the French Armies. Nivelle's fame, however, was short-lived. Predicting an early victory, he launched a powerful offensive in the center of the front only to find himself, after a few weeks, with huge losses, negligible gains, and a mutiny among the troops. Pétain was then called upon to correct the situation.

Pétain was known for his cautiousness and his concern for the welfare of the soldier; his appointment did much to restore the morale of the troops. But again there were difficulties. Narrowly nationalistic in his approach and always filled with pessimism, Pétain had resolved that the French, who had suffered overwhelming losses, had done enough, and that the British should take over the task of engaging the enemy. Moreover, he was determined that no all-out blow should be contemplated for a long time, until a sufficient American contingent had joined the Allied troops to participate substantially in such a blow. Pétain's reticence toward energetic action was resented by many, and not the least by the British, who felt that he had let them down during the staggering German onslaughts on the British lines which marked the first phase of the great March offensive of 1918. At Doullens, where on the twenty-sixth of that month, in the midst of German successes, it was finally decided to appoint a Supreme Allied Commander, it was Foch, the advocate of repeated feeling-out attacks followed by

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bigger blows, and long the intellectual rival of Pétain in the field of military strategy, who was selected. Pétain's pride received another severe jolt.

In spite of Foch's moral victory over Pétain, however, it was the latter's ideas which, during the interwar period, crept back into currency. The memory of tremendous losses, a general consciousness of France's potential inferiority *vis-à-vis* Germany, and the fact that, as a result of their victory, the French were no longer seeking a revision of frontiers but rather to preserve their gains—all these factors pointed toward a defensive orientation, and made Pétain the obvious authority for the postwar military reorganization of the nation. Hence, while the other leading military figures of World War I gradually disappeared from the scene, Pétain became the uncontested master of military thought. The interwar military organization of France was all but a complete embodiment of his ideas. The Maginot Line, which he endorsed wholeheartedly, was its symbol: a powerful barrier erected in the intention of stopping any possible German offensive, which also, by inspiring a feeling of security, discouraged any tendency to revert to the concepts of a French offensive, as formerly advocated by Foch, Joffre and Nivelle.

However, this rarely paralleled hegemony was not sufficient reparation for Pétain's frustrations and his humiliation before Foch, for Pétain did not fail to realize that in spite of his eventual success, his star would always shed a paler light than that of the former Supreme Allied Commander. Events confirmed this disparity, increasing Pétain's resentment. Foch was named Marshal before the final victory had been achieved, while Pétain had to wait several months before being raised to this honor, in the company of a number of lesser military leaders; and the whole painful situation reached an ironic climax when Pétain was elected by the French Academy to fill the seat vacated by Foch's death, and was obliged, in keeping with the Academy's tradition, to read a eulogy of his lifelong rival before the members of this exalted body, who were fully aware of that rivalry.

The self-righteous mind of the Marshal was incapable of accepting this moral defeat; the recognition which he had failed to

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obtain in fact, he supplied for himself through rationalization. Convinced that the war had proved his greater wisdom, he blamed an unjust fate for constantly depriving him of rightful recognition. As the years passed, he gradually built on this theme, and in his mind, which was not immune to the increased rigidity of old age, saw himself as a perennial though unheeded hero of France who was only called in times of disasters to repair others' mistakes. "They only call me in catastrophes!" he was to declare to a visitor during his Vichy rule. This thought became a fixed idea with him. He saw his whole career in terms of his mission of national salvation: at Verdun, he had saved the soil of France; in 1917, he had preserved the French army as an efficient fighting force by restoring the morale of the troops, badly shaken by the reckless tactics of his predecessors; then, in 1925, it was the French Empire that was saved by his intervention, when he was sent to put down the Riffian rebellion.

After his retirement in 1931, the magic of his name caused him to be called again in situations in which prestige and public esteem were the primary needs. But for Pétain these calls fell into the pattern of his self-discovered mission. Thus, when in 1934, in the midst of riots, scandal and disorder, Premier Doumergue sought to include the name of the revered Marshal in his cabinet to help pacify the aroused spirits, Pétain accepted, declaring rather pompously: "The Prime Minister told me that the nation needed me. I did not seek to evade my duty!" In 1939, it was as first French ambassador to the victorious Franco, whom the left-wing government of France had opposed during the Civil War, that Pétain was called to serve. He accepted once again, commenting to his friends: "I am going to Spain in order to make up for the sins of the Popular Front."

The idea of bringing the "great soldier" to political power was already occurring to many minds during the 1930's. The Pétain campaign waged by the French fascist, Gustave Hervé, was only a manifestation of this thought from the political dregs of the nation. But it was shared half-consciously by many, and at the time of the presidential election of 1939 the Marshal's name was whispered a number of times. Yet neither a *coup d'état*, which was what Hervé advocated, nor the more or less ornamental functions of President of

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the Republic, would have been much in keeping with Pétain's concept of himself as a traditional hero ready to answer the call of distress. Therefore, politics had little attraction for him in the years preceding the Second World War.

With the outbreak of the war, however, France entered upon another critical period of her history, one filled with possibilities for the man who considered himself his country's perennial providential savior. From his Spanish embassy, the Marshal kept in close touch with the developments at home, and the increasingly bad news which reached him gave him a sense of his destiny. He became convinced that he was about to be called to perform his greatest task of national salvation, and he prepared actively for the responsibilities he soon expected to shoulder. He kept in communication with Laval and some lesser political figures, took a number of trips to Paris unconnected with his post as Ambassador, consulted important people, including Darlan, in a search for dependable collaborators, toyed with little lists of cabinets he contemplated forming, and finally was to confess his expectation in the dramatic statement to Anatole de Monzie—a secondary French political figure—on March 30, 1940: "They will need me in the second fortnight of May!" Much was made of all these facts in the case against Pétain, and particularly of the declaration of March 30—as evidence that he was leading a plot for the overthrow of the Republic. Actually no such plot existed, and these manifestations merely give us a vivid insight into the preoccupations of the Marshal at the time.

Events favored Pétain's ambition; in the early days of the debâcle, Paul Reynaud recalled him from Spain to offer him the post of Vice-Premier. Actually Reynaud, like Doumergue in 1934, wanted a symbol to rally the wavering spirit of the nation. But Pétain conceived the role which he was about to play in far vaster terms than those of a figurehead. He saw the sore and contrite nation once again turning to her traditional savior, only with greater urgency than ever before, and ready to entrust her destinies to his hands; and he was ready to lead her out of her present state of woe, and away from all the errors which had brought it about. His "ministry," therefore, was going to represent the culmination of his savior's career, the ultimate vindication of his superior wisdom. His mes-

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sianic conceptions were to pervade all his addresses to the nation. His announcement in his very first address after taking the helm was, "I am making to France the gift of my person to allay her misery." And when he declared, a few days later,

> I was with you in days of glory. Head of the government, I am still and will remain with you in these somber days. Stand by my side!

he was reminding the people of his peculiar destiny.

It is easy to understand under these circumstances the strong appeal of political power for the old Marshal. His rule was to enable him to maintain his vast pretension. From the time he joined the Reynaud cabinet, he was to work for the establishment, then the perpetuation, of his rule with an obsessive singleness of purpose which made him blind to any other necessity; which made him disregard ruthlessly the consequences of his actions, including their effect upon the progress of the war—unless they bore directly on his self-preservation. The existence of his régime was to be the beginning, the end, and the ultimate justification of all his actions.

Thus, he was capable of applying personal pressure verging on blackmail during the tragic last cabinet meetings of early June, 1940, for the abandonment of France's allies and the early conclusion of an armistice; of pushing Paul Reynaud out of power; of lending the prestige of his name to the operation which was to bury the Third Republic; of launching a vast national revolution which was to organize his rule on a more permanent basis; of keeping the still intact fleet out of active participation in the fight against France's oppressors; of pursuing the so-called "dissidents" who refused to honor the Armistice out of which Vichy had arisen; of conceiving the possibility of a policy of collaboration with the Germans, if they would allow the Vichy government greater freedom; of allowing the French to fire on Allied troops landing in Vichyite Africa in a first stage of the rollback of Nazi power.

However, Pétain's struggle for self-preservation was waged against all his adversaries, of whatever camp. He dispensed with Laval, his campaign manager, when Laval, who had made the mistake of trying to use the Marshal as a figurehead, asserted himself overtly. And, just as he had conceived of a policy of collabora-

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tion with Germany and had gone to Montoire to discuss its possibility with Hitler, so did he resist fiercely the mounting impositions and encroachments of the Germans, earning from them the nickname of "Marschall Immer Nein"; finally he allowed the fleet to scuttle itself rather than fall into German hands. The memorandum of Otto Abetz on Franco-German relations, dated July 1, 1943, is a long bill of complaints against the unco-operativeness of the Marshal, and constitutes a strong piece of testimony in his favor.

Pétain's anxiety to maintain a hold on the government was probably most clearly embodied in his stand against leaving the country. He had established this line of conduct for himself in the days of the debâcle, not minding at first, however, seeing the other political leaders scatter before the advancing enemy troops, while he gathered the reins of power securely in his hands. He stuck to his decision in 1942, after the Allied landing in North Africa, preferring his disintegrating power to fleeing to the liberated French colonies. And in 1944, when the Germans withdrew to their inner fortress, he refused once again to leave the nation he governed, having to be carried out of France as a prisoner.

It is to be noted, finally, that Pétain's entourage at Vichy came increasingly to consist of men who could be relied upon to uphold and propagate the legend of Pétain's providential mission. Soon, all the old political figures disappeared and were replaced by awe-struck panegyrists, like Dumoulin de la Barthète, or by members of the military—men bred to the unquestioning respect of their superiors—and especially by former subordinates like Generals Laure and Debeney, who were familiar with the hypersensitive vanity of the old Marshal.

It was this vanity, then, goaded by constant frustration into a monomaniacal desire for justification and idolization, which lay at the heart of Pétain's political ambition as it manifested itself dramatically during the somber days of the nation's prostration. It does not explain the rise of Vichy. This phenomenon had a complex set of causes; among them were the military defeat, the mounting tide of antiparliamentarism, and the political machinations of other individuals. However, it does go a long way to explain the problem of Pétain's political behavior.

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In spite of Pétain's efforts, the Vichy experiment collapsed with the annulment of the defeat which had given it its start. But the tenacious old Marshal never wavered in his belief in himself. When in 1945 procedures *in absentia* were started against him, he dramatically reappeared in Switzerland, demanding to face his accusers. Before them and the world, in the summer of 1945, he was to make his last testament of self-righteousness.

I have spent my life at the service of France [he declared, in the only statement in his defense which he made during the trial]. Today, almost ninety years old, cast in jail, it is my desire to continue serving her by addressing myself to her once again. Let her remember . . . ! I led her armies to victory, in 1918. Then, although I had earned my peace, I never ceased to dedicate myself to her.

I answered all her calls, whatever my age and my weariness.

On the most tragic day in her history, she turned once again toward me. I wanted nothing, asked for nothing. I was begged to come: I came.

He was to close the debates, several weeks later, with these words:

Judges of the Court! My life and my freedom rest in your hands; but my honor I entrust to my country.

Do with me as your consciences dictate. Mine has nothing to reproach me. . . .

And there is little doubt that his conscience reproached him nothing. In the last dim light of his mind, distorted by frustrations and old age, when truth and imagination had become hopelessly mixed, the picture of himself as France's historic savior continued to predominate. It is almost certain that he went to his island confinement feeling that he had done only good and that his unhappy ending was but the continuation of his cruel fate—the fate of never being rightfully rewarded for his gallant actions.

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Toys of Desperation

HAROLD ZLOTNIK

> The very place puts toys of desperation,
> Without more motive, into every brain
> That looks so many fathoms to the sea
> And hears it roar beneath.
>
> —SHAKESPEARE

In each of us a precipice of fear
Toward which in sleeping moments we are drawn
By wild magnetic dreams . . . . Dark gulfs appear
And frightening declivities where spawn
The sharks of thought. Within the sleep-fed foam
And all along each inauspicious shore
The waves of memory beckon us home
To fluid infancy's forgotten lore.

O cogent childhood—where each casual hour
The toys of desperation lie in seed,
Where subtle weather on the meadowed mind
Makes cliffs of sorrow—teach us in our need
The meaning of this mad vertiginous power
That pulls us forward as we look behind.

✪ HAROLD ZLOTNIK teaches English in a New York City high school. He is now studying toward his doctorate at New York University and has a volume of poems in preparation. Mr. Zlotnik's poems have been published in the *Saturday Review of Literature* and other magazines.

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The Christmas Carol and the Economic Man

EDGAR JOHNSON

EVERYONE knows Dickens' *Christmas Carol* for its colorful painting of a rosy fireside good cheer and warmth of feeling, made all the more vivid by the contrasting chill wintry darkness in which its radiant scenes are framed. Most readers realize too how characteristic of all Dickens' sentiments about the Christmas season are the laughter and tenderness and jollity he poured into the *Carol*. What is not so widely understood is that it was also consistently and deliberately created as a critical blast against the very rationale of industrialism and its assumptions about the organizing principles of society. It is an attack upon both the economic behavior of the nineteenth century business man and the supporting theory of doctrinaire utilitarianism. As such it is a good deal more significant than the mere outburst of warmhearted sentimentality it is often taken to be.

Its sharper intent is, indeed, ingeniously disguised. Not even the festivities at Dingley Dell, in *Pickwick Papers,* seem to have a more genial innocence than the scenes of the *Christmas Carol*. It is full of the tang of snow and cold air and crisp green holly-leaves, and warm with the glow of crimson holly-berries, blazing hearths, and human hearts. Deeper than this, however, Dickens makes of the Christmas spirit a symbolic criticism of the relations that throughout almost all the rest of the year subsist among men. It is a touchstone, revealing and drawing forth the gold of generosity ordinarily crusted over with selfish habit, an earnest of the truth that our natures are not entirely or even essentially devoted to competitive struggle.

● Associate professor and chairman of the department of English at the College of the City of New York, EDGAR JOHNSON is the author or editor of several volumes. This article is adapted from a chapter of his forthcoming biography, *Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph,* to be published in 1952.

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Dickens is certain that the enjoyment most men are able to feel in the happiness of others can play a larger part than it does in the tenor of their lives. The sense of brotherhood, he feels, can be broadened to a deeper and more active concern for the welfare of all mankind. It is in this light that Dickens sees the Spirit of Christmas. So understood, as the distinguished scholar Professor Louis Cazamian rightly points out, his "philosophie de Noël" becomes the very core of his social thinking.

Not that Christmas has for Dickens more than the very smallest connection with Christian dogma or theology. It involves no conception of the virgin birth or transubstantiation or sacrificial atonement or redemption by faith. For Dickens Christmas is primarily a human, not a supernatural, feast, with glowing emphasis on goose and gravy, plum-pudding and punch, mistletoe and kissing-games, dancing and frolic, as well as open-handedness, sympathy, and warmth of heart. Dickens does not believe that love of others demands utter abnegation or mortification of the flesh; it is not sadness but joyful fellowship. The triumphal meaning of Christmas peals in the angel voices ringing through the sky: "On earth peace, good will to men." It is a sign that men do not live by bread alone, that they do not live for barter and sale alone. No way of life is either true or rewarding that leaves out men's need of loving and of being loved.

The theme of the *Christmas Carol* is thus closely linked with the theme of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, which was being written and published as a serial during the very time in which the shorter story appeared. The selfishness so variously manifested in the one is limited in the other to the selfishness of financial gain. For in an acquisitive society the form that selfishness predominantly takes is monetary greed. The purpose of such a society is the protection of property rights. Its rules are created by those who have money and power, and are designed, to the extent that they are consistent, for the perpetuation of money and power. With the growing importance of commerce in the eighteenth century, and of industry in the nineteenth, political economists—the "philosophers" Dickens detested—rationalized the spirit of ruthless greed into a system claiming authority throughout society.

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Services as well as goods, they said, were subject only to the laws of profitable trade. There was no just price. One bought in the cheapest market and sold in the dearest. There was no just wage. The mill owner paid the mill hand what competition decreed under the determination of the "iron law of wage." If the poor, the insufficiently aggressive, and the mediocre in ability were unable to live on what they could get, they must starve—or put up with the treadmill and the workhouse—and even these institutions represented concessions to mere humanity that must be made as forbidding as possible. Ideally, no sentimental conceptions must be allowed to obstruct the workings of the law of supply and demand. "Cash-nexus" was the sole bond between man and man. The supreme embodiment of this social theory was the notion of the "economic man," that curiously fragmentary picture of human nature, who never performed any action except at the dictates of monetary gain. And Scrooge, in the *Christmas Carol,* is nothing other than a personification of economic man.

Scrooge's entire life is limited to cash-boxes, ledgers and bills of sale. He underpays and bullies and terrifies his clerk, and grudges him even enough coal in his office fire to keep warm. All sentiment, kindness, generosity, tenderness, he dismisses as humbug. All imagination he regards as a species of mental indigestion. He feels that he has discharged his full duty to society in contributing his share of the taxes that pay for the prison, the workhouse, the operation of the treadmill and the poor law, and he bitterly resents having his pocket picked to keep even them going. The out-of-work and the indigent sick are to him merely idle and useless; they had better die and decrease the surplus population. So entirely does Scrooge exemplify the economic man that, like that abstraction, his grasping rapacity has ceased to have any purpose beyond itself: when he closes up his office for the night he takes his pinched heart off to a solitary dinner at a tavern and then to his bleak chambers where he sits alone over his gruel.

Now from one angle, of course, *A Christmas Carol* indicts the economic philosophy represented by Scrooge for its unhappy influence on society. England's prosperity was not so uncertain—if, indeed, any nation's ever is—that she needed to be parsimonious and

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cruel to her waifs and strays, or even to the incompetents and casualties of life. To neglect the poor, to deny them education, to give them no protection from covetous employers, to let them be thrown out of work and fall ill and die in filthy surroundings that then engender spreading pestilence, to allow them to be harried by misery into crime—all these turn out in the long run to be the most disastrous shortsightedness.

That is what the Ghost of Christmas Present means in showing Scrooge the two ragged and wolfish children glaring from beneath its robes. "They are Man's," says the Spirit. "And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased." And when Scrooge asks if they have no refuge, the Spirit ironically echoes his own words: "Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?"

Scrooge's relation with his clerk Bob Cratchit is another illustration of the same point. To say, as some commentators have done, that Scrooge is paying Cratchit all he is worth on the open market (or he would get another job) is to assume the very conditions Dickens is attacking. It is not only that timid, uncompetitive people like Bob Cratchit may lack the courage to bargain for their rights. But, as Dickens knows well, there are many things other than the usefulness of a man's work that determine his wage—the existence, for example, of a large body of other men able to do the same job. And if Cratchit is getting the established remuneration for his work, that makes the situation worse, not better; for instead of an isolated one, his is a general case. What Dickens has at heart is not any economic conception like Marx's labor theory of value, but a feeling of the human value of human beings. Unless a man is a noxious danger to society, Dickens feels, a beast of prey to be segregated or destroyed; if he is able and willing to work, whatever the work may be—he is entitled at least to enough for him to live on, by the mere virtue of his humanity alone.

But the actual organization that Dickens saw in society callously disregarded all such humane principles. The hardened criminal was maintained in jail with more care than the helpless debtor who had

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broken no law. The pauper who owed nobody, but whom age, illness or industrial change might have thrown out of work, was treated more severely than many a debtor and jailbird. And the poor clerk or laborer, rendered powerless by his need or the number of others like him, could be held to a pittance barely sufficient to keep him and his family from starvation.

Against such inequities Dickens maintains that any work worth doing should be paid enough to maintain a man and his family without grinding worry. How are the Bob Cratchits and their helpless children to live? Or are we to let the crippled Tiny Tims die and decrease the surplus population? "Man," says the Ghost, "if man you be in heart, not adamant, forbear that wicked cant until you have discovered What the surplus is and Where it is. . . . It may be, that in the sight of Heaven, you are more worthless and less fit to live than millions like this poor man's child. Oh God! to hear the Insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers in the dust!"

Coldhearted arrogance and injustice storing up a dangerous heritage of poverty and ignorance—such is Dickens' judgment of the economic system that Scrooge exemplifies. But its consequences do not end with the cruelties it inflicts upon the masses of the people or the evils it works in society. It injures Scrooge as well. All the more generous impulses of humanity he has stifled and mutilated in himself. All natural affection he has crushed. The lonely boy he used to be, weeping in school, the tender brother, the eager youth, the young man who once fell disinterestedly in love with a dowerless girl—what has he done to them in making himself into a money-making machine, as hard and sharp as flint, and frozen with the internal ice that clutches his shriveled heart? That dismal cell, his office, and his gloomy rooms, are only a prison within which he dwells self-confined, barred and close-locked as he drags a chain of his own cash-boxes and dusty ledgers. Acting on a distortedly inadequate conception of self-interest, Scrooge has deformed and crippled himself to bitter sterility.

And Scrooge's fallacy is the fallacy of organized society. Like his house, which Dickens fancifully imagines playing hide-and-seek with other houses when it was a young house, and losing its way in

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a blind alley it has forgotten how to get out of, Scrooge has lost his way between youth and maturity. Society too in the course of its development has gone astray and then hardened itself in obdurate error with a heartless economic theory. Scrooge's conversion is more than the transformation of a single human being. It is a plea for society itself to undergo a change of heart.

Dickens does not, it should be noticed, take the uncompromising position that the self-regarding emotions are to be eradicated altogether. He is not one of those austere theorists who hold that the individual must be subordinated to the state or immolate himself to the service of an abstract humanity. Concern for one's self and one's own welfare is necessary and right, but true self-love cannot be severed from love of others without growing barren and diseased. Only in the communion of brotherhood is it healthy and fruitful. When Scrooge has truly changed, and has dispatched the anonymous gift of the turkey to Bob Cratchit as an earnest of repentance, his next move is to go to his nephew's house and ask wistfully, "Will you let me in, Fred?" With love reanimated in his heart, he may hope for love.

There have been readers who objected to Scrooge's conversion as too sudden and radical to be psychologically convincing. But this is to mistake a semi-serious fantasy for a piece of prosaic realism. Even so, the emotions in Scrooge to which the Ghosts appeal are no unsound means to the intended end: the awakened memories of a past when he had known gentler and warmer ties than in any of his later years, the realization of his exclusion from all kindness and affection in others now, the fears of a future when he may be lonelier and more unloved still. And William James in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* provides scores of case-histories that parallel both the suddenness of Scrooge's conversion and the sense of radiant joy he feels in the world around him after it has taken place. It may be that what really gives the skeptics pause is that Scrooge is converted to a gospel of good cheer. They could probably believe easily enough if he espoused some gloomy doctrine of intolerance.

But it is doubtful whether such questions ever arise when one is actually reading the *Christmas Carol*. From the very beginning Dickens strikes a tone of playful exaggeration that warns us this is

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no exercise in naturalism. Scrooge carries "his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days." Blind men's dogs, when they see him coming, tug their masters into doorways to avoid him. The entire world of the story is an animistic one: houses play hide-and-seek, door-knockers come to life as human heads, the tuning of a fiddle is "like fifty stomach aches," old Fezziwig's legs wink as he dances, potatoes bubbling in a saucepan knock loudly at the lid "to be let out and peeled." Scrooge's own language has a jocose hyperbole, even when he is supposed to be most ferocious or most terrified, that makes his very utterance seem half a masquerade. "If I could work my will," he snarls, "every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!" Is that the accent of a genuine curmudgeon or of a man trying to sound more violent than he feels? And to Marley's Ghost, despite his disquiet, he remarks, "You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blob of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are!"

All these things make it clear that Dickens—as always when he is most deeply moved and most profound—is speaking in terms of unavowed allegory. But the allegory of Dickens is in one way subtler than the allegory of writers like Kafka or Melville. Kafka is always hinting the existence of hidden meanings by making the experience of his characters so baffling and irrational on a merely realistic level that we are obliged to search for symbolic significances. And Melville, too, by a score of devices, from those rolling, darkly magnificent and extraordinary soliloquies to the mystery of Ahab's intense and impassioned pursuit of the White Whale, forces us to realize that this is a more metaphysical duel than one with a mere deep-sea beast.

Dickens, however, leaves his surface action so entirely clear and the behavior of his characters so plain that they do not puzzle us into groping for gnomic meanings. Scrooge is a miser, his nephew a warmhearted fellow, Bob Cratchit a poor clerk—what could be simpler? If there is a touch of oddity in the details, that is merely Dickens's well-known comic grotesquerie; if Scrooge's change of

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heart is sharp and antithetical, that is only Dickens' melodramatic sentimentality. Surely all the world knows that Dickens is never profound?

But the truth is that Dickens has so fused his abstract thought and its imaginative forming that one melts almost entirely into the other. Though our emotional perception of Dickens' meaning is immediate and spontaneous, nothing in his handling thrusts upon us an intellectual statement of that meaning. But more than a warm-hearted outpouring of holiday sentiment, the *Christmas Carol* is in essence a serio-comic parable of social redemption. Marley's Ghost is the symbol of divine grace, and the three Christmas Spirits are the working of that grace through the agencies of memory, example and fear. And Scrooge, although of course he is himself too, is not himself alone: he is the embodiment of all that concentration upon material power and callous indifference to the welfare of human beings that the economists had erected into a system, businessmen and industrialists pursued relentlessly, and society taken for granted as inevitable and proper. The conversion of Scrooge is an image of the conversion for which Dickens hopes among mankind.

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Photograph at Sixteen

DOROTHY LEE RICHARDSON

This is a map of my own country—
Or what once was.
Others looked from outside on this country,
Saw light pass

Over the valleys and the promontories,
Saw storms cloud
The lakes, the valleys, and the promontories,
But never stood

Inside its boundaries as once I used to,
Warmed by its light,
Chilled by its vapors, looking toward the planets
Of its clear night.

This is a map of my own country,
And yet it seems
So foreign I might never have faced its mountains
Or stared into its streams.

This is the land in which I once was living,
Where it was good to bide—
Unfurrowed, virgin country I no longer
Can step inside.

✪ DOROTHY LEE RICHARDSON is the wife of an Episcopal missionary to the Philippines, where she lives with her husband and their three children. Her poems have appeared in the *American Mercury*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Christian Century*, *Poetry*, the *Saturday Review of Literature* and THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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Consider Me

LANGSTON HUGHES

Consider me:
A colored boy,
Once sixteen,
Once five, once three,
Once nobody,
Now me.
Before me
Papa, mama,
Grandpa, grandma,
So on back
To original
Pa—
Spelled G-o-d.

(A capital letter there,
God being Mystery.)

Consider me:
Colored boy,
Downtown at eight,
Sometimes working late,
Overtime pay
To sport away,
Or save,
Or give my Sugar
For the things
She needs.

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CONSIDER ME

Consider her:
My Sugar,
Who works, too.
Has to—
One don't make enough
For all the stuff
It takes to live.
Forgive me
What I lack,
Black,
Caught in a crack
That splits the world in two
From China via Alabama
To Lenox Avenue.

Consider me:
On Friday
The eagle flies.
Saturday
Laughter, a bar, a bed.
Sunday
Prayers syncopate glory.
Monday, comes eight,
To work, late—
Maybe.

Consider me,
Descended also
From the
Mystery.

✪ LANGSTON HUGHES, born in Missouri, now living in New York, has written seven books of poems, his latest being a long panoramic poem of Harlem, *Montage Of A Dream Deferred*. His latest book of prose is *Simple Speaks His Mind*. In the Spring, Henry Holt will publish his new volume of short stories, *Laughing To Keep From Crying*.

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The Reader Replies . . . . . .

THE READER REPLIES *regularly carries miscellaneous comments by readers on various articles which have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *Phi Beta Kappa Hall, Williamsburg, Va., and should not exceed 300 words in length except on request. Because of limitations of space, the editors cannot guarantee to print all letters received. Letters intended for publication in the Spring number should be mailed before December 15.*

The first three letters below are well beyond the usual maximum length. Those of Professor Hastings and Mr. Lerner were originally intended for inclusion in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR FORUM *for this number, but are printed here since this* FORUM *was abandoned.* *(See page 112.)* *It was deemed proper that Mr. Viereck should have more space than usual at his disposal to answer Mr. Rice. (See the Autumn, 1951, number.)*—EDITOR.

To Save Democracy

I am wholly in agreement with Mr. Jones's comprehensive and searching analysis of the character and consequences of loyalty oaths. Since good wine needs no bush, I would be content to say no more, but will venture to retrace some of the ground from the point of view of my personal observation and experiences.

I had my first—and last—encounter with a loyalty oath in the summer of 1936, when I was teaching in the summer school of a state college. A couple of days before the end of the session a young woman came to my office with a slip of paper in her hand. "I shall have to ask you to sign this," she said. I glanced at it and saw it was one of those primitive or unevolved oaths then usual. "I never signed one of these in my life," I said. "If I was going to do any disloyal teaching, isn't the damage already done?" She gasped and registered dismay: "You'll have to sign it if you want your salary." "Oh, I'll sign it," I said, and did so. Apparently she did not report that I signed with mental reservations, for I got my check.

My spiritual disturbance over this incident was trivial—was certainly not exactly humiliation—though I remembered it a long time. Some of my good friends, lawyers and public servants who take an oath every time they turn around, would have thought it ridiculous. But it has helped me to understand the psychology of more recent "non-signers"—the one who said he "just didn't like being shoved around," those who have felt insulted, those who are born to be martyrs, those who love limelight, and that larger and more significant group who have seen in the current forms of oath a long step in the direction of the control of thought and opinion, with implications destructive of the basis of our democracy.

Of all that has been said, and well said, against teachers' oaths, three things stand out most in my mind: they are futile; they are humiliating; they are repressive.

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The laughable futility in my own case is clear. But the recent efforts to formulate and impose elaborately foolproof oaths are equally futile. Under penalty of perjury a signer of the Mississippi oath of 1950 must declare he is not a subversive person, that is, one "who commits, attempts to commit, or aids in the commission, or advocates, abets, advises or teaches by any means any person to commit, attempt to commit, or aid in the commission of any act intended to overthrow, destroy, or alter, or assist in the overthrow," etc., etc., of the government of the United States or Mississippi or any political subdivision (down, I suppose, to the smallest school district).

The disloyal American has nothing to lose and much to gain by signing it. The loyal teacher may well be disturbed by the thought that a passing favorable reference in class to TVA may mark him as at least a fellow-traveler, and, ironically, that a leftist student may react to a pungently conservative remark in class by plunging into violent radicalism—the teacher's conservatism thus contributing to the student's possibly subversive thoughts and acts. Most, I fear, will sign, with a laugh ranging from the wry to the cynical.

The laugh is a cover for the individual's feeling of humiliation—not a wholesome mood for him or for our American society. The humiliation is not relieved by the fact that in several states, including Mississippi, all persons on the state payroll must take the oath, for its terms are particularly applicable to teachers, and no doubt were devised with teachers in mind rather than reading clerks, deputy sheriffs or shovel leaners.

But it is the repressive effect of the oaths that really matters. The frame of mind which seeks control of "dangerous" opinion has always existed, even in our democracy; the masters of the Kremlin have merely given it a new objective and greater outspokenness. We teachers in the fields of literature, history, economics and philosophy have been aware of it all along; we are aware of the contempt in certain quarters for "long-haired professors," for "impractical idealists." From ancient and recent history let us recall what happened when President Andrews of Brown espoused free silver; what the American Legion is said to be doing about textbooks in American history (after all, the Post Office Department *is* a mildly socialistic operation); what a regent of the University of Texas wanted to do to the professor who put Dos Passos' *USA* on a reading list, and what the Texas legislature recently wanted to do to Professor Ayres of the department of economics (unavailingly, to the great honor of the University administration)—and that, at another university, a clergyman is said to have been assigned a room in order to "correct" for students of his faith the "errors" of the department of philosophy. I recall that at Brown the dramatic society was the object of severe criticism for producing *Waiting for Lefty*, was refused a license for *Within the Gates*, and was advised last year to give Sartre's *No Exit* as a private performance because it was on the Index of the Legion of Decency. Particularly, of course, we recall the Wallace campaign of 1948: the philosopher at Evansville who was fired, the teachers at New Hampshire who rightly or wrongly felt that their positions were in jeopardy, the friendly caution I received because I accepted the invitation of a student committee to introduce Mr. Wallace to a campus gathering.

Most teachers, understandably, step gingerly or keep silence within areas of opinion in which large or vociferous groups have violent convictions. The issue is far larger than the anti-Communist oath. Democracy itself is at stake, as Mr. Jones effectively observes. If we do not want our colleges to go the way of the German universities under Hitler or the Russian ones of today, we must stand up and fight, in the words of the statement issued by Phi Beta Kappa, all "efforts, either from the extreme right or the extreme left, to restrict within our institutions of learning the impartial analysis and evaluation of any and all literary, political, economic, social or religious tenets."

Only thus will our heritage be secure.

WILLIAM T. HASTINGS
Brown University

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The People Who Must Be Reached

To Howard Jones's witty and eloquent soliloquy on freedom there is nothing I can add through any embroidery of the basic argument, with which I agree. I should like only to set down some reflections on the nature of American society and the American character which may point up the problem of intellectual freedom.

What troubles me is why so many Americans feel tempted to break away from a tradition that has done good service for America during almost two centuries. I too have received the kind of hate-letters that Jones quotes from his anonymous correspondents—almost illegible, wholly illiterate, covered with scrawled obscenities and drenched in anti-Semitic and anti-intellectual hatred. If I thought that these letters represented American popular opinion, I would be tempted to slit my throat. They do not. The point about them is that in every society there are hatreds and frustrations which the movement of events displaces on chosen victims, and that there are men and women with the intellect of apes and the impulses of goons on the margin of the American Commonwealth. The more dangerous men, however, are those like Marshall Neylan, the organizer of the campaign of terror against the faculty of the University of California—men who know what they are after with a cold deliberateness. Their purpose is to transform an Open Society into a Closed Society because they fear the people and hate the exchange and matching of ideas.

Most Americans, I am convinced, do not stand with Neylan, and certainly not with the scrawlers of the hate-obscenities—but neither do they stand where Howard Jones does. I have crisscrossed the continent a number of times since the end of World War II, speaking to and with audiences of diverse kinds. I can report that on this issue of complete intellectual freedom, most Americans have decent impulses, limited by their lack of information and tempered by a practical wariness.

They are not as convinced as Howard Jones is that the danger from Communists is only marginal and crackpot. They have watched the extension of Soviet power, have seen it move into area after area where it seemed to meet some felt need of a people thirsting for discipline and rigid direction, have seen how a people like the Czechs were betrayed and conquered by a small group from within working with a world network of propaganda and power. They are convinced that the Communist danger is real enough, and—with Congress and the press and even the Federal Courts—they are convinced that communism is not only a doctrine but is also a conspiracy. Hence they are almost ready to follow the men who tell them that the catchwords of freedom are less important than the survival of America against the Reds.

These are the people—these, and not the haters nor yet the devoted idealists—who must be reached if American freedom is not to dissolve as in a nightmare. It is the responsibility of the American scholar to reach them.

The world struggle for power (he can say to them) is a bitter one and may last for decades and even generations. If we act wisely and sanely, we may achieve a Long Truce which is our best approximation of the doctrine of "co-existence" of communism and capitalist Democracy. But (he can say to them) the hunt for dangerous thoughts in America will hurt us, not help us, in our struggle to meet the challenge of Soviet power. For the Communist doctrine has no roots in the soil of American thinking. Its efforts in America have been a caricature of its tactics in very different kinds of societies. It has gained few adherents, and most of those are now disillusioned. It is a contemptible, weak and bedraggled movement. The real danger that strikes at the heart of America is the danger that we will get panicky, and play into the hands of militarists and McCarthyites—the Big Guns and the Big Goons.

I am by no means certain that we can reach the people I speak of, but we have to try. What makes it difficult is that the kind of society out of which the doctrines of Jefferson and Lincoln—and even Holmes—

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were born, no longer retains its old outlines and securities. Americans have been torn away from many things that once held them committed to freedom—from the soil they cleared and owned and tilled, from the tools that were theirs and the work that carried dignity for them, from the close-knit family and the face-to-face neighborhood, from a fluid social system in which the class structure had not become rigid at both ends, from an ethic which placed conscience above the Fast Buck.

Will we be able to find meanings in intellectual freedom that make sense in this new setting? We had better, unless we want to lose not only our souls but also our America.

MAX LERNER
162 E. 92nd St.
New York, N. Y.

Peter Viereck's Reply

This serves me right! Hoist by my own petard: just another "New Critic" *malgré moi*. That was my first reaction to Mr. Rice's enormous commentary against the undue length of poetry commentaries. But —in the same mail with Mr. Rice's worries about my "obscurity," I get letters denouncing my poetry for having what one of my Pound-cultist reviewers called too lucid a "coarse clarity." Hence my second reaction: a deeper and humbler comprehension of the danger—and also of the necessity—of continuing to serve a conciliatory central position of mediation in the current civil war in poetry. I feel like some political moderate who has equally rejected the two extremes of fascism and communism, only to be called a Red by Senator McCarthy (by analogy Mr. Rice) for not being reactionary enough, and a fascist by radicals (by analogy "avant-garde") for not being rebellious enough.

Solution: to distinguish between real and alleged obscurity. Real obscurity arises from either charlatanism or incompetence; this is what I attacked in the April *Commentary* magazine, correctly quoted by Mr. Rice. But alleged obscurity is often a simplicity too original or too profound to be immediately clear to modern pap-cravers. I refer to those who re-read detective stories five times for the meaning, but will not bother glancing twice at a modern poem without sighing for the allegedly lucid "good old days" of Shakespeare and Donne. Shakespeare they never read except in captions of the movie *Henry V;* of Donne they know only the line "for whom the bell tolls."

Let us distinguish between real and alleged obscurity in poetry with the same "ceaseless vigilance" needed to distinguish between real and alleged duplicity in politics. Loose irresponsible accusations of obscurity spring from the same psychology as irresponsible accusations of being "a Red." The psychology is that of the philistine's revenge for intellectual humiliation by the introverts. Conversely, the obscurity-cults and *précieux* coteries are the Sensitive Plant's revenge for Regular-Feller humiliation by the extroverts. In both cases, reason and beauty succumb to vengeful injured vanity. To understand the violence of poetry disputes, readers must understand not one but both cases of this mutual-humiliation process. That is why I gratefully welcome Mr. Rice's very sincere outburst: not in order to "defend" my poetry and criticism (which speak for themselves), but as a priceless social document illustrating the above analysis of loose "obscurity"-baiting.

Note his resentment of such superb poets as Auden, etc. Note his praise of no post-Homer poet except Masefield. How about Edgar Guest? No danger of "puzzling magic" there. Mr. Rice's "parody" seems the only section in this social document of his that is never a parody. The rest sounds like a diabolically clever parody of "I don't know much about art, but I know what I like." Of my own poem (which I had commented on *solely at the express invitation* of the editor) I have nothing further to say except this: it will now sink or swim on its own demerits or merits.

By "magic" I do not, of course, mean "poetry for illuminati," a total distortion of what I wrote. I mean simply that the

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mood and music of lyric poetry is never wholly captured in a prose paraphrase. Denotation cannot capture connotation. Cleanth Brooks has pointed this out excellently; here I agree with the New Critics: this half of their doctrine I always defend. What I oppose in them is their tendency to treat esthetic reactions at "pure" and formalistic, separate from psychology and ethics and content, instead of as a Gestalt in which esthetics and ethics are—despite the Bollingen award to Pound—inextricably fused.

Mr. Rice's letter (the philistine's revenge) almost justifies the most extreme claims of the New Critics. It almost converts the reader to obscurity and crossword puzzles. In turn, our giddier and more pretentious obscurantists (the Sensitive Plant's counter-revenge) and the sterile epigones of the unsterile Eliot almost justify even Mr. Rice. In politics the two extremes of fascism and communism—and in poetry the two extremes of philistines and hermetic formalists—grow on each other, desperately need each other, and are both wrong. Both pairs of opposite extremes (no connection between the pairs except by analogy) intimidate individual self-expression: (1) in politics, by fellow-travelers vs. Committees on Un-American Activities; (2) in poetry, by Little Magazine mandarins vs. big-magazine Committees on Un-Philistine Activities.

In poetry let us of the free Third Force —in politics let us of the "vital center"— never be panicked into choosing either extreme, no matter how provocatively we are abused and derided by the Babbitt Seniors of philistia or the Babbitt Juniors of bohemia. Let us stand our ground against both extremes with equal vigor and yield not an inch to either. Nothing less than free individualism in art and in politics is at stake.

PETER VIERECK
South Hadley, Mass.

The Loyalty Oath for Scholars

I read with interest the editorial of Hippocrates, Jr., in the Summer, 1951, issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. The "Loyalty Oath for Scholars" was amusing as well as vaguely reminiscent of the thoughts which have coursed my mind on dozens of occasions, in particular:

". . . that a student under my care owes his first allegiance to himself and not to my specialty; and must not be burdened with my work as if he followed no other and had contracted no obligation under heaven but that of satisfying my requirements."

R. HARVEY CHAPPELL, JR.
Richmond, Virginia

The New Criticism and the Democratic Tradition

If it isn't too late I'd like to say a few things *re* your New Criticism soirée. The first impression I am left with is the evasiveness of Mr. Tate. When confronted with the mention of the Pope he says: "Oh sure. The Pope is a competent man. . . . Sure, by the fact of his being Pope, he is competent." Is this the New Criticism at work? The inference one would draw from this is that the New Criticism has a tendency toward passivity within certain crucial areas —nonliterary areas. It would be interesting to hear Mr. Tate's reactions to the Blanshard books.

Again when Mr. Tate pronounces: "My feeling is that X, an honored American poet, is no better than Ezra Pound and I have told him that. It happened that X was on the winning side," etc., one wonders just who this poet is and why Mr. Tate is too timorous to name names and risk argument.* By failing to be specific he only obscures the issue and lends to the impression that the New Criticism leads away from rather than into reality.

Then Mr. Burke with all his dialectics of word-meanings just doesn't add up, except to the fact that perhaps a dogma isn't necessarily a dogma; when is a hierarchy not a hierarchy? and such curious riddles as that. Why not keep to cases?

Mr. Davis tried to articulate his thesis by saying: "But isn't that part of Southern

* The deletion of the name occurred *after* the actual session, at Mr. Tate's request.

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traditionalism, that you have to maintain a certain way of life in order to have certain values," etc. But the course of the discussion was not sustained upon how values apply to ways of life but rather upon the ways of words. As Mr. Tate put it: "It's not the literary critic's business to seek them [values] in society. His business is to seek them in books."

It becomes increasingly evident why the New Critics look with no kindness upon Emerson, whose view was that "Thinking is only a partial act." Mr. Tate's example of the retreat into books and Mr. Burke's retreat into words become in the final analysis not New Criticism but No Criticism in any real sense, the accent falling upon real.

It would be most interesting to witness another symposium with the same participants, this one to have a central subject of focus, e.g., "The Essays of Emerson," "The Blanshard Books," "The Cantos of Ezra Pound," "The Waste Land and Four Quartets," "Wallace Stevens' Essays." This might be conducted along the lines of "Invitation to Learning."

Please accept heartiest congratulations for a substantial contribution to an understanding of the New Criticism and its modus operandi. In boxing there is a term "bicycling" by which the boxer feints, dodges, backtracks, spars, and performs myriad motions, none of which have to do with the punch of a Joe Louis (the early Joe). The New Critics would seem to be forever "on the bicycle," a tactic appreciated most of all by dictators whether political, clerical, or heads of families, all of whom are dominantly concerned with power and its execution, and who are deterred almost not at all by words of an abstractionist variety.

E. Whitney Tarr
115 Kilsyth Rd.
Brighton 46, Mass.

* * *

Although I found the second installment of the New Criticism Forum (Spring, 1951) very stimulating, I was disappointed that one of the basic issues was never really faced.

Both Mr. Tate and Mr. Burke, for example, dismiss Eliot's "magnification of the Past" in *The Waste Land* as simply a method of criticizing the present. According to one of their own critical canons, however, we are supposed to consider not what Eliot may have intended to say, but what he actually does say in this poem. In *The Waste Land*, Eliot contrasts, through implication after implication, a *particular* period in the past with a *particular* period in the present. His criticism of the present, because of the specific symbols he chooses, is a criticism peculiar to himself, with very definite connotations.

Only after acknowledging this do we confront the real problem: the question of aesthetic relevance. How important, to the poem and to our reaction to it, is the fact that Eliot's renaissance does not coincide with the Renaissance as a historical event, or that his interpretation of the present coincides with that of only a small group of people today?

If we limit the connotations of words to the contexts in which they are used by the poet, *The Waste Land*, as a "problem of formal effect," is a success. But how valid is such a limitation? The distinction which seems to me basic to the New Criticism, and which was not touched on in the Forum, is simply this. The New Critics, in one way or another, would confine the connotations of the words used by a poet to the realm of language alone. In opposition to this concept of literary limitation stands another group of critics who deny that the poetic meanings of words can be isolated in this way. Words are symbols; they have reference to an object-world beyond the world of language; and if this is so, their meaning in the object-world is part of the poet's equipment and responsibility.

This divergence of viewpoints is the issue which I should like, at some future time, to see discussed in The American Scholar.

Eleanor Singer
88-25 Union Turnpike
Brooklyn 27, N.Y.

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* * *

Re the New Criticism controversy in your spring issue, do the fellows participating realize how they sound in the unmasked speech of a stenographic report? Human like. What a relief! Like the rest of us, they overuse the word "things." Another thing, they're butting in on each other, the trouble with all of us. We don't want meetings of minds, rather parade of our own egos.

Ernest Hemingway, for instance, once fine writer, come to prating about "me und Gott," arrived finally at an authoritarian position. Nihilism always ends up that way. The rest of us Americans are only now awakening to what we are beginning to lose, easily forgetting that retention of democratic processes demands the extreme of positive efforts in times like these, particularly from cultural and intellectual leaders now under insidious attack.

Sure, there are schools, schools, schools of thought, starting fine—in this case, why not consider the poem in itself? But a coterie develops in the very struggle for recognition. When one gets too cocky, too strong, the axe does swing against the new nonconformist, the same treatment meted out to the New Critics by their elders.

All of which took me back to re-reading Emerson's oration, "The American Scholar," which should ring bells for you Phi Beta Kappa fellows—but how the New Critics would laugh!

Emerson remarks that we read to reinforce our own preconceptions. Yet he puts genius in all of us. Why not—what genius developed out of thin air? He makes the noble in all of us worth pursuing. Oh, yes, a transcendentalist. People aren't too much that way, observation bears out. But can't they be at intervals? Sparks do fly. Comets appear. Are we going to put on a good performance constantly reminding ourselves we're s.o.b.'s?

Well, hold, enough. Just wanted you to know what the New Critics did to me. Sent me back to Papa Emerson!

Louise Shadduck
Route 1, Box 113
Mill Valley, California

Louis Simpson's Review

I want to comment on only two of the many points of disagreement I have with Louis Simpson's review of Arthur Koestler's *The Age of Longing*.

First, Mr. Simpson wonders why the book was written in the first place. He misconstrues the words of one of the characters, Julien, in his effort to prove this point. Mr. Simpson says that "Julien (who can no longer write) observes that the essence of Nikitin is his reality, a reality so obnoxious that there is no place for it in fiction." What Julien actually says is that, as an author, he would have to identify himself completely with the Communist Nikitin in order to be able to present an objective picture of him. This he cannot do, since Nikitin revolts him, and therefore he can no longer write at all, because Nikitin and his kind excluded, no other subject matters sufficiently to him.

That is far from saying, as Mr. Simpson interprets it, that fiction has no place for an obnoxious reality like Nikitin. It is quite obviously the author's belief that fiction does have a place for him—that fiction would have no value if it did not reflect reality. In writing about Nikitin, Mr. Koestler is merely following his own advice to writers (in *The Yogi and the Commissar*) to stick their feet in a pail of hot water for inspiration and open the windows wide to let the world in. He, unlike Julien, is fortunately not unable to write.

Secondly, Mr. Simpson thinks that Koestler is in favor of "isolated gestures in the face of tyranny" and that Hydie should therefore have succeeded in killing Nikitin. However, the futility of these gestures when they are in the form of attempts to destroy an idea by singling out and killing some one person who embodies the idea, is demonstrated throughout the book (e.g. Boris, who goes insane and plots to kill the tyrant. The latter is already dead, but Boris won't believe it because conditions in the "Commonwealth" have remained unchanged). Hydie's action, like Boris's insane plots, is understandable but purpose-

(*Continued on page 128*)

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..... *Under Whatever Sky* .....

IRWIN EDMAN

Far Off, Quite Happy Things

It is a pleasure these days to turn first, as I sometimes do, to that column in the morning paper which lists briefly a few choice events of one hundred and also of twenty years ago. A hundred years ago is history; it always was, even when I was a boy half a century ago. For that matter so was the Spanish-American War, even though it had taken place only six years before I went to school. But eighteen fifty-one! It might have been the time of the Flood. Twenty years ago is a different but not too different a story. It is history now, no doubt of it. It was the period of years before World War II, and before the unbelievable worst of the depression. Twenty or a hundred years ago—one can scarcely remember to keep those neolithic and paleolithic ages apart in one's mind.

It is curious how indistinguishably quaint both eras have become. Twenty years ago is remote enough so that even one then adult can hardly remember the details. Were there actually thinly clad men selling apples on street corners? Were talking movies really a novelty? Had national networks in radio really just begun? Was Hitler still a laughable upstart demagogue who would never get anywhere in Germany? Or have I simply read all this in memoirs of the time? The pictures of that time seem to be period pieces already. And the plays and the novels—how unknown most of their names sound now.

Events a hundred years ago are more definitely gone, it is true. They are over. Three thousand immigrants or more arrived on a summer day in 1851. "And Still They Come!" the headline in the old New York *Tribune* began. Exceptional clerical positions were offered at twelve dollars a week. The grave illness of European royalty was reported in letters only a month old.

It is pleasant and puzzling to imagine what will seem quaint twenty or a hundred years from now—our anxieties, perhaps, our radio programs, our diets, our taxes, our wars? I have a two-year-old grandnephew. He may live (so much is length of life increasing), he may be alive one hundred years from now. I must ask him a few years from now to be sure to note what seems quaint about us as he looks back from his hundredth birthday, even though at that time I suspect he will not be able to let me know. But life expectancy is such that it is not too much to hope that I myself may live to see what will seem old-fashioned, only twenty years from now. Our fear of war, or our failure to fear it, our fashions in clothes or in cars? Or perhaps in ideas. Existentialism seems quaint already, and even Shaw begins to fade.

Pro Bono Publico

"*Les fonctionnaires,*" the French call them, and one wishes the word functionary were used as colloquially in English to identify the little tyrants, sometimes large nuisances, who impose the rules they do not make, or as often fail to behave according to the rules which they are expected to observe, those little wheels who seem by turns either rigid or capricious. These are the officials who remind you that you must wait your turn, but who take someone they know out of turn, the bureaucrats who are unyielding on the letter of the law and who, one is well aware, ignore it when they wish to, for a favorite or for a whim.

The functionaries are the embodiment of a large-scale organization, governmental

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or business, against which the anonymous man knows he is helpless. From childhood on one has feared them and conciliated them: the policeman, the bank teller, the receptionist, the man in the box office, the customs inspector, the ship's purser, the clerk at the travel agency, the registrar at the college, the train conductor. In one way or another these are power, certified and uniformed, and like our primitive ancestors we bow down before power, we quail before it, we placate it.

Doubtless the train conductor does not normally think I am trying to steal a ride. But to this day I feel morally certain I have mislaid my ticket, even when I am clutching it in my hand. Up to now I have never lost a passport, and I have no reason to believe that I look like a suspicious character or that, even in these days of easy suspicion, my appearance suggests the revolutionary. But I cannot approach a frontier or see the face of an immigration official when the train arrives at the frontier, without thinking that the official will stare at me and suddenly with a stern look of recognition lead me off to a detention cell for questioning. At the very least he will tell me, I am sure, that I cannot come into the realm he is sworn to protect. There are no jewels or narcotics in my belongings, yet I am almost as relieved as a smuggler might be, when the customs official chalks off my valises and, in England, often with a friendly smile. Theater tickets, Heaven knows, cost enough, but I am tempted to thank a box office agent as if he were conferring a great and special boon upon me when he lets me have a ticket (for a king's ransom) for a performance six months from now. The haughty receptionist who lets me in to see the great man; the hotel clerk who assigns me a room, even in an empty hotel in off-season—I still feel specially indebted to these as for an act of grace and of compassion.

The worm turns now and then. One speaks up to vast powers as Job (though not for long) spoke up to God. The vast organization behind the functionary cannot crush altogether the private spirit, the independent soul. It is in such a mood that one writes the letter of complaint (which will be read by another functionary) from whom one will receive a purely functional reply. There has been gross injustice or gross carelessness committed. The luggage was sent to the wrong place, although it was clearly marked. The reservation was not kept though it had been made; one was sent a bill twice when it had already been paid; the check was not honored though there were funds in the bank; the telegram was not delivered though the addressee (or he who should have been) was at home eagerly awaiting it.

How wonderful a release it is at such a provocation to sit down and write a letter of complaint, full of righteous indignation at the inefficiency, the needless cruelty, the gratuitous discourtesy, the carelessness so embarrassing in its consequences. The unhonored check ruined one's credit; the hotel room not obtained wrecked one's day; the lost luggage utterly damaged one's vacation or one's career. What a catharsis to pour ironies upon the vaunted competence and responsibility of the vast colossus against which one has taken up small arms. How exhilarating to ask what has become of all their I B M machines, their fool-proof filing systems, their widely advertised solicitude for every client, their tenderness for the always correct customer, their respect for every taxpayer. And when the polite though literal-minded reply comes (and sometimes a refund too); when one is informed that one's complaint has gone up to the highest quarters; when sometimes one hears from the president of the company, himself, or from the head of a government department—well, one's lifelong war with the power has been triumphant at last. The little man does count in a world of gigantic forces, the small voice still is heard. Human liberty is safe. One knows how the leading peasants felt in the Peasants' Revolt; one understands the spirit that animated Boliver and Byron and Galileo. The next time I meet a train conductor I shall look him squarely in the eye; when next I sit down beside the desk of an assistant manager in a branch bank I shall probably sweep his desk blotter off his desk, and

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his calendar and his rubber stamp and his power of attorney and a few certified checks!

Mr. Encyclopedia

I have often felt a secret guilt in not feeling as fascinated by X's discourses as I should be, and as others claim they are. It ought really be more exhilarating than it actually is to have someone give so ready and extensive an answer to any question one raises, or so ready and extensive a discourse even when one has not asked a question at all. It is, of course, morally stimulating to know someone who, in this specialized day and narrow age takes all knowledge for his province, and all mankind for his audience. But the Ancient Mariner fixed his listener, and so does this Modern Marvel.

There are doubtless many explanations of why X has become so great a bore to so many—or, at any rate, to me. One explanation is jealousy, I am sure. After many years I have decided not to assent to the notion of the genteel tradition that it is the duty of all literate persons to be or to pretend to be universal men. On hot days especially, or at the end of any long day, it seems a uselessly exhausting ambition. It is doubtless a lack of intellectual curiosity on my part that makes me feel thus. But there are moments when what some remote Polish logician said about Homer seems neither relevant nor urgent. There are times when items of bibliography seem something less than thrilling or pressing. One could, it has been suggested by some of his most urgent admirers, get a liberal education simply by having lunch often enough with X. But there are times when even education seems irrelevant, moments when to be in the company of ignorance is bliss, and when, as in an old Oxford tradition, academic shop talk seems the wrong note while the meat is on the table.

The Therapeutic Wastebasket

There are periods when the world and one's own life seem hopelessly untidy and involved, and when it looks as if nothing much could be done to put the cosmos or one's own affairs in order. But something can be done, although it is a token only, a gesture merely—an opiate, not a solution. When the public state of things seems beyond rehabilitation and one's own life inextricably involved, when one seems to have arrived nowhere and yet to have gone too far, when everything is at cross-purposes or void of meaning altogether—then is the moment when one should begin getting rid of old papers.

Unfailingly, by the time just one wastebasket is filled, one is bound to feel ever so much better. How much of documentary distraction one has thrown away, including one's own writings, including perhaps letters one had meant long ago to mail. There are half-finished essays, verses that did not jell, scraps toward projects that never came to anything, and, it is clear now, never will. One disposes of letters from strangers or from friends, which one had always meant to answer. But they are six months old—some of them (one blushes) six years. One might just as well get rid of them all now. The mood of tidying up gathers momentum. Into oblivion go brilliant sallies from friends written long ago from exotic places, or letters from celebrities one had originally meant to keep always. But why?

There are the clippings that seemed so striking, so fascinating or so touching, when one first cut them out, poems and epigrams and the obituaries of friends. One borrows another wastebasket, and throws into it the copies of old magazines and the reprints of articles by colleagues, even by one's self, though there is naturally a longer pause with these.

The paper mountain, now definitely crumpled rubbish, is put outside the door. How much better one feels! The world is no better ordered; neither is one's own life. Doubtless, indeed, in the fit of enthusiastic tidiness, one has thrown away letters that urgently demand answers, checks one had counted on cashing, perhaps a passport precious beyond money itself. But for the moment everything seems to add up to tidier good sense; at least there is a little oasis of order in the universe; at least here

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the debris and ruins of the private past have been disposed of. Aristotle may speak of the tragic catharsis. But for true clarification of spirit, there is nothing like getting rid of old papers. To-morrow to fresh folders and papers new!

New Faces

There was once a time, though one did not realize it until later, when half one's life was spent in experimentation with new friendships. Anyhow, anywhere, one might make the great encounter, hear the voice that would utter the right opinion (coincidentally agreeing with one's own), meet some spirit with whom one could share the same discovery: César Franck, was it, or Stravinsky? Romain Rolland or Rupert Brooke? Some stranger, just met, would open up new worlds of experience. He had been to Brazil, he had been to China; he had been married, he had been divorced. The friendships would not always last, and one hardly expected that they would. Sometimes it was a boon to have them end. The criminal, the world traveler, the divorcé, were so much less interesting than one had supposed. Or the early charm became a later cliché. But there were always new friends with new horizons to point to, and even to follow.

Those days are over now, one says. Life is full of repetitious patterns. One gets the idea. One has been to Brazil one's self perhaps, or to China, or been married, or divorced. Or one knows so many people who have been or done one or another of these things. And in any case, by a certain age one has almost too many acquaintances. One must avoid the casual promiscuity of a headwaiter or the pointless curiosity of the Inquiring Reporter.

It is in such a mood that one declines invitations to cocktail parties, or forgets them. Thus one feels when one is silent with tablemates on shipboard, or incurious about other guests on the porch of a country inn where one has lodged for the night. But once and again the spirit of youth comes back. On the train from New York to Albany the stranger sitting in the adjoining seat turns out to have been brought up in the Aran Islands. The stranger lounging on the porch was a governor once, out West. The listener beside one at Tanglewood makes exactly the right remark about Ravel, or uses the perfect epithet about tedium or about the weather. Just so once a lifelong friendship began, long, long ago. Why not now?

American Scholar Forum

In the Autumn, 1951, number, it was announced that the FORUM *for the Winter number would consist of comments on the Autumn* FORUM. *Despite soliciting a large number of contributors, the Editors were able to secure only two. Hence the* FORUM *has been omitted in this number, and the two contributions appear at the beginning of* THE READER REPLIES. *The* FORUM *will be renewed as usual in the Spring, 1952, number.*—EDITOR.

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A Grasp of Moral Realities

LIE DOWN IN DARKNESS. By William Styron. Indianapolis and New York: *The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1951. 400 pp. $3.50.*

Reviewed by ROBERT GORHAM DAVIS

"Only that story deserves to be called moral," says the narrator at the end of Goethe's *Procurator*, "which shows us that man possesses within himself the force to act even contrary to his inclinations through a conviction of something better."

The great interest of William Styron's *Lie Down in Darkness*—apart from the marvelous talent which it constantly and variously displays—is a moral one. His principal characters, members of a fairly prominent, fairly respectable, fairly well-to-do family in a Virginia sea-coast city, do not themselves, it is true, meet Goethe's test. They are as weak and neurotic as any of the damned or doomed in recent naturalistic fiction. At the decisive, irredeemable moments, when everything depends on their not doing so, they take too many drinks, go to bed with the wrong person, yield to habitual and destructive impulses of self-righteousness, jealousy, vengefulness and deceit.

From the outside—or even from the inside in limited Dreiserian perspective—their behavior may seem determined. Indeed, Milton Loftis, the father, occasionally excuses his corrupting treatment of his wife, his mistress and his daughters, by references to determinism, to man's moral helplessness. But William Styron, who was only twenty-five when he finished *Lie Down in Darkness*, has an uncanny ability to move into the minds and feelings of people like the middle-aged Loftis parents and their friends, to reproduce their inner experiences with utterly convincing completeness. In this fullness of consciousness the important moments present themselves as moments of inescapable choice, and if past behavior has helped to determine the choice now, it has also taught more and more emphatically the consequences of such a choice. The characters cannot hide from themselves the fact that what happens is what they themselves have really willed. Milton and Helen Loftis have flashes of clear insight into what they are doing so terribly to each other, to themselves and to their daughter Peyton, and they have impulses to save themselves which they finally deliberately block or evade.

William Styron has dazzling gifts with language, and great observational powers in describing moods, incidents, landscapes and conversations. But it is the moral tension of his best scenes that gives such dramatic interest to a story which in outline is so familiarly depressing (it is all told in flashbacks on the day of the daughter Peyton's funeral) and to characters which are not, on the whole, very likable or amusing. Their depth and humanity derive from the constant sense of moral election implicit in the situation, and it is with real anguish that we experience their failure. Styron tells the story with such an imaginative grasp of moral realities that we can sympathize profoundly and yet judge quite objectively. To know all is not to pardon all; quite the contrary. This applies quite as much to Helen Loftis, shielding herself behind the church and her love for her defective daughter Maudie, as it does to

✪ ROBERT GORHAM DAVIS is an associate professor of English at Smith College and a frequent contributor to the critical reviews, especially to the New York *Times Book Review* and to *Partisan Review*.

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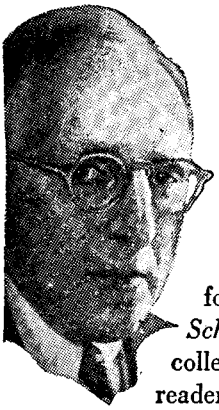
Irwin Edman's

informal reflections on this wayward world



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Milton Loftis, living on his wife's money and overtly incestuous in his affection for his daughter Peyton.

It is only in his treatment of the younger generation, his own generation, that the author lets his intuitive sense of individual responsibility be replaced by the myth of a doomed generation, a myth taken directly from the novelists from whom he has learned his art. Maudie and Peyton Loftis are quite incapable, the first physically, the second spiritually, of determining their own fates. They are simply the symbolic consequences of their parents' failings. The explicit assumption is that both in a family and in a society a weak or lost generation can be followed only by one weaker and even more desperately lost, although this is implicitly denied by the creative strength and the Goethean conviction of something better in Styron's own work.

Peyton's career, though it is done brilliantly as far as details are concerned, is simply a greased slide down through drunkenness and nymphomania to a suicide leap and shipment to Potter's Field. Peyton combines the fates of Quentin and Caddy Compson in Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*. (Faulkner says of Caddy, "Doomed and knew it, accepted the doom without either seeking or fleeing it.") Styron takes over from Faulkner not only his lost lovely heroine, but also some specific symbolism, such as that of the clock, and the idea of ending the novel at a Negro revival meeting. The Negroes in the novel are all originals, however, wonderfully known and respected, and Milton and Helen Loftis, Milton's mistress Dolly, and the servant La Ruth are in the best tradition of the novel of character of the nineteenth century, a tradition which *Lie Down in Darkness* shows to be far from exhausted. Styron is remarkably mature already in his novelist's art and in his understanding of human nature. A conceptual maturity consistent with his vision of life and freed from some of the philosophic clichés of recent literary convention is bound to follow.

* * *

Why the Communists Failed

THE NEGRO AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY. By Wilson Record. *Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1951. pp. 344. $3.50.*

Reviewed by ALAIN LOCKE

To trace and interpret Communist objectives and plans regarding the American Negro over a period of three decades since 1920, with all the devious shifts of strategy and tactics involved is, in the first place, a difficult assignment. But in addition, to delve from the outside into the internal politics of a minority group and reveal in a very fair and illuminating way the reactions of Negro organizations and their leaders toward Communist programs and moves is perhaps even more of an undertaking. Both tasks have been executed by the author of this book with singular accuracy, objectivity and insight. Professor Record has set a model of balance and impartiality in dealing in so objective and dispassionate a way with so partisan and controversial a subject.

First requisite in the matter, of course, was scrupulous and lucid statement of the facts. This was assured by a careful documentation of Communist policies and program taken almost exclusively from official Party pronouncements or semi-official sources. That executed, the next crucial step was an analysis of Negro mass and leadership reactions. Here, too, a penetrating and well-documented survey has been made of Communist contact with the entire gamut of Negro organizations seriously approached, as well as of Negro participation in the major radical organizations. But since facts never explain themselves, interpretation finally becomes inevitable, and here the study issues in several well-substantiated conclusions. These are to the effect that, despite great initial appeal in making common cause with the Negro struggle for equality and sustained

✪ Professor of philosophy at Howard University, ALAIN LOCKE is at present on leave under a Rockefeller Foundation grant to complete a book, *The Negro in American Culture.*

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and vehement Communist campaigns against legal, political, economic and social injustices and discrimination suffered by the Negro, Negro rights and protest organizations almost without exception refused to be absorbed by ideological envelopment or taken over by managerial infiltration. One very notable instance was a practical abandonment of a flourishing united front organization—the National Negro Congress—when in 1940 executive control was captured by avowed Communist elements. Its president, A. Philip Randolph, a veteran Socialist and later leader of the "March on Washington Movement," whose protests resulted in President Roosevelt's momentous Executive Order inaugurating the fair employment practice policy, resigned on this issue of Communist control and the organization shortly disintegrated. Negro leadership, it seems, insistently guarded its independence.

That so much Communist effort was exerted to such disproportionate effect, with net results of no fixed affiliation with any major Negro organization and a Negro party membership comprising at its peak estimate 8000, less than one-tenth of one percent of the Negro population, calls for incisive explanation. The author attributes it to a double set of factors, both unfavorable to the success of any Communist plan to channel Negro protest into orthodox Marxist containment or to convert its dynamic of grievance and discontent into revolutionary class struggle.

On the Communist side lay serious errors of judgment as to the basic character of the Negro position. The initial concept of the situation as that of a "nation within a nation," with its unrealistic and, for the Negro, unacceptable objective of Black Belt self-determination, was a primary mistake which led to others. The psychological solidarity of the Negro minority with regard to its rights did not indicate, as the Communists wishfully thought, solid proletarian structure or orientation, and more importantly, formed no basis for bloc separatism. On the contrary, its ultimate objectives were assimilationist, and so fundamentally American as to justify Mr. Record fully in his assertion that the goal of Negro protest was equal rights and opportunity based on the Bill of Rights and conceived within the traditional framework of American institutions.

On the Negro side, especially since the orientation of Negro protest organizations was pragmatic rather than doctrinaire, sharp changes of policy and emphasis regarding the place and importance of the race issue as dictated by the exigencies of the Communist party line proved disillusioning and aroused deep suspicion of Communist motives. This, coupled with characteristic attempts to control leaders and leadership initiative, led to further rapid alienation of even those Negroes who were originally attracted. Disregard of the deep-rooted racial sentiments historically involved in the Negro struggle for rights became another negative factor, although to compensate there were concerted attempts by Communist groups to reinforce such movements as the campaigns promoting Negro history, Negro culture and the arts. And so, as the study clearly definitely reports, Communist action in America has missed its initial objective of a wholesale conquest of a dissident Negro minority.

Witty and Charming

COLLECTOR'S PROGRESS. By Wilmarth Lewis. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1951. pp. 253. $5.*

Reviewed by GEORGE F. WHICHER

Mr. Lewis completely captures his readers from the very first paragraph of this vivacious chronicle of a master passion. After remarking, in the words of Horace Walpole, that the collector who publishes an account of his "villa and collection" may fear to be thought arrogant, he continues, "but he has a still stronger fear that the world will not know that he has a collec-

✪ Author and professor of English at Amherst College, GEORGE F. WHICHER is a contributor to the *Cambridge History of American Literature* and *Dictionary of American Biography*. His articles, verse, and reviews have appeared in a variety of publications.

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CONTRIBUTORS

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E. R. HUGHES
DHIRENDRA MOHAN DATTA
SWAMI NIKHILANANDA
EDWIN A. BURTT
WILLIAM RAY DENNES
FILMER S. C. NORTHROP
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tion worth writing about." This observation sets the tone for one of the most witty and altogether charming books of the twentieth century—a period which has not been productive of too many books of that description.

We read on enthralled while Mr. Lewis relates the successive steps in the formation of "the finest collection of Walpole in the world," the result of his pertinacious pursuit of material from London to Peru. First, however, he describes with quiet humor the making of a collector. He began as a boy to gather stamps, coins and butterflies, then graduated into a connoisseur of books in general, and finally, by one of the lucky accidents which have frequently occurred in his experience, settled upon the great letter-writer and purveyor of eighteenth century gossip as the focus of his special interest. Thereafter his education was rapidly advanced by his contacts with book-dealers, owners of Walpole manuscripts, private collectors, librarians, professors and various oddments of humanity encountered on the trail. It is clear that Mr. Lewis knows how to approach and win all sorts of people. He has charmed Walpole letters out of stony hearts, and he has even accomplished the miracle of conjuring books out of institutions into his private library. He has made few mistakes, and though he has sometimes been baffled, his triumphs have so far outweighed his defeats that he may be considered a happy man. He has had a genius for exposing himself to good fortune, as well as an uncanny instinct which has often led him to locate Walpole items in unlikely places.

He has pursued his hobby with a crusader's zeal, having decided for himself that Walpole was one of the great figures of his age and a badly neglected author. This opinion was confirmed by Professor Tinker of Yale. Mr. Lewis then investigated the charge that Walpole was in some sense responsible for the suicide of the young poet Chatterton, and found the imputation groundless. It appeared that Walpole was a man whom he could wholeheartedly admire. The eighteenth century was only just beginning to interest collectors, and here was the writer of the finest letters ever penned in English, the matchless recorder of the social history of his time, waiting to be rescued. Mr. Lewis straightway plunged for Walpoliana.

In something less than thirty years the fruits of his industry and enthusiasm have surpassed all expectations, including his own. He has assembled all editions of Walpole's books, many of them in the form of association copies; a large number of volumes from the library at Strawberry Hill; about two-fifths of the now extant Walpole letters in the original manuscript and about as many more in photostat copies; portraits, prints, relics and countless subsidiary items. No wonder that the overflowing libraries at Farmington have become a Mecca for students of all phases of the eighteenth century. Mr. Lewis' success in making almost a clean sweep of available material, as summarized in the introductory chapter, is amazing. A good idea of the extent of the collection may be gleaned from the illustrations in this book. There are twenty-four of them, and every item shown is taken from the Lewis collection. They are, moreover, so cleverly placed in relation to the text that each illustration faces the page on which the article illustrated is discussed.

Besides books and many other tangible objects, Mr. Lewis has gathered some of the best anecdotes that ever adorned a collector's memoirs. They are told with inimitable gusto. He has not immersed himself in Walpole's writing without learning how to point a story and turn a phrase. Quite aside from the engrossing matter that Mr. Lewis has to relate, his book is a sheer joy on account of the expertness of the telling.

"To make a collection that stores up something of importance to society and then place it at society's disposal is to store up civilization for posterity's use." This is Mr. Lewis's final apologia. His Walpole collection is to be preserved at Yale, and meanwhile there have come out of it, besides numerous subsidiary publications, the magnificent *Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence,* which Mr. Lewis

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hopes will reach its fiftieth and final volume by his seventieth birthday. This will be his monument, yet it is safe to say that no volume of Walpole will make better reading than the book in which this ardent and friendly collector has recorded his exploits. Perhaps a collector still to come, probably a Yale man, will devote his energies to gathering the letters of Wilmarth Lewis for posterity. At a guess they will equal Walpole's in other respects besides illegibility.

The Early Days of Israel

MY MISSION IN ISRAEL. By James G. McDonald. *New York: Simon and Schuster. 1951. 297 pp. $3.50.*

Reviewed by THOMAS SUGRUE

Tel Aviv in the late summer of 1948 was a gold rush town for diplomats, newspapermen, and Zionists, those starry-eyed but steady-handed Hebrews who for forty years had wandered in the wilderness of international politics, looking for the Promised Land of a Jewish National Home. Israel had been born in the spring, on May 14th, first child of the United Nations and the first Jewish commonwealth since 70 A.D. The infant state had been attacked as it emerged from the womb; the Arab League had sent armies over all points of its border, and had announced its intention of pushing the Jews, all 600,000 of them, into the sea. An under-armed, oddly-costumed Israeli army, made up for the most part of farmers and townsmen from the informal underground force which the Jews had built up during the Mandate, had checked the invasion and in some places rolled it back. The United Nations had negotiated a truce; Israel had avoided civil conflict with one of its terrorist groups; there had been a brief second round of fighting; and now there was another truce.

This second truce was most uneasy, and

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in the midst of it, while the Israeli government was trying to get its bureaucratic clothes on, the world came to witness the spectacle of prophecy fulfilled, the sight of Jews gathered from the countries in which they had been scattered, and restored to a land made to blossom under their touch. Overnight the housing shortage in Tel Aviv expanded to fantastic dimensions, and inflation took on a wild growth; there was no place to put anyone, and nearly everything became impossible to procure. At this point the Russian diplomatic representative arrived, and so did the American diplomatic representative, a lean, white-haired international expert named James G. McDonald, who was accompanied by his pretty young daughter Barbara. The Russian and the McDonalds were placed in the Gat-Rimmon Hotel, a seaside inn with no carpets, no elevators, no telephone service, and no facilities for keeping its guests from running into one another when they left their small rooms and entered the narrow corridors.

Mr. McDonald, a former chairman of the Foreign Policy Association and once League of Nations High Commissioner for German Refugees, had more to worry him than the proximity of a Kremlin man and the problem of finding an office for his staff and a home for his family. He had served on the Anglo-Palestine Committee, which in 1946 had tried its hand at settling the thirty-year-old dilemma of Palestine, begun when the Allies of World War I made conflicting gifts to Jews and Arabs, promising—generally if not specifically—the same territory to both, in return for an Arab insurrection against the Turks and co-operation from world Jewry against Germany. He therefore knew the background of his new job well, but he was acutely aware that although the President had picked him for the job, he was not the State Department's selection and was regarded by his immediate bosses as an amateur and a friend of the Zionist cause—as was Mr. Truman. The Department seemed to regard the fact of Israel as a bit of bad taste, as if certain folk had been admitted through the front door when they ought

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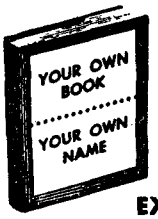

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properly have been sent to the service entrance. This polite version of anti-Semitism he found operative elsewhere, in London and at the Vatican for example, and he realized that Israel would have to walk a careful course if she were not to be the victim, diplomatically, of an old cliché, "Any stick is good enough to beat a Jew with."

He was an anxious and a hard-working man, therefore, during the crisis of Count Bernadotte's assassination, at the Paris meeting of the UN in which the Bernadotte plan (which would have ruined Israel's hope for economic self-sufficiency) came up for discussion, in the military brushes that made the truce a farce and caused Ernest Bevin to roar threats of British intervention, and in the libel which became the "any old stick," the question of Arab refugees. After the national elections of January, 1949, when Israel proved her political maturity and dispelled the slanders of communism and banditry, things eased up for Mr. McDonald. Ralph Bunche managed somehow to arrange armistice agreements between Israel and her various assailants, and Mr. McDonald himself was made Ambassador, indication that both he and his protégé had done well. He enjoyed himself a good deal from then on, and learned much about Israel and her people and leaders, some of which he puts into this account of his mission, and all of which is enlightening to a person who knows little of the Jews of Israel, who are a new and admirable people sprung from an old and honorable tradition.

The book as a whole is a casual, intimate, at all times personal narration of one of the most meaningful happenings in contemporary history; its implications for the Middle East, its importance to world Jewry from a cultural as well as a political point of view, and its meaning for a Christian world heavily indebted to the ancestors of the present Israelis, are matters gathered up and discussed by Mr. McDonald in the way of a man who knows what he is talking about, who understands it, and who sees shrewdly into its future. *My Mission in Israel* is therefore at least semi-required reading for the intelligent citizen.

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(Continued from page 108)

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